

THE MATHNAWÍ
OF
JALÁLU'DDÍN RÚMÍ

EDITED FROM THE OLDEST MANUSCRIPTS
AVAILABLE: WITH CRITICAL NOTES,
TRANSLATION, & COMMENTARY

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THE MASNAVI

BOOK ONE

Prose Introduction

This is the Masnavi, the roots of the main tenets of theology regarding the unveiling of the secrets of certain knowledge and union. It is the greatest creed and the most luminous of holy laws, as well as the most manifest of proofs of God—His light is like a niche in which there is a lamp that shines more brightly than the dawn. This book's the paradise of hearts with boughs and springs, one known as Salsabil* by travellers on this path; to those with mystic stations who know miracles it is the very best of stations and of resting places.* The godly here both eat and drink; the free feel joy and mirth through it. It is, like Egypt's Nile, a wine for patient worshippers, but an affliction for all Pharaoh's people and those who don't believe—as He has said: Many He leads astray by it, while many others God will guide with it.* It is the cure for breasts, the purge of sorrows, the Koran's unveiler, and a vast profusion of Man's sustenance and purest qualities. And it was written by the hands of noble, pious scribes,* who in this way ordain that none shall touch it but the purified, a revelation from the Lord of both the worlds!* Falsehood does not approach it from the front or from behind,* God watches it and oversees it too: He is the best of guards and the most merciful of all.* And it has other titles given to it by the Lord. We've just provided this brief summary—a token which points to much more: a mouthful tells of a whole pool, a handful indicates a threshing-floor of wheat.*

This slave in need of mercy from the Lord, Mohammad Ebn Mohammad Ebn Hosayn from Balkh, may God accept him, says: I've striven in composing this long work of rhyming couplets which comprises wonders, rarities, enlightened sayings, pearls of guidance, the path of the ascetics, and the garden of the pietists—concise in form but rich in terms of meaning—to answer the request of my chief and support, the location of the spirit in my body and my provision for today and for tomorrow, chief and exemplar for the mystics, leader to certainty and guidance, helper of mankind, trustee of hearts and intellects, who was established by the Lord among His creatures, His choice among created beings, the aim of the injunctions given to the Prophet and the secrets shared with just His chosen one, the key to all the treasures of the empyrean, trustee of treasures in this world too: that's Abu'l-Faza'el

Hosamo'l-Haqq-wa'ddin, named Hasan Ebn Mohammad Ebn Hasan Akhi Tork, the Abu Yazid of his time, Jonayd of this age, veracious like his father and his grandfather, may God be pleased with him and them. Originating from Orumiya, from the lineage of that noble shaikh who said, 'Last night I was a Kurd, but now I've woken up an Arab!'* God bless his soul and those of his successors too. How blest the ancestor as well as the successor!*

His is a lineage on which the sun has cast its mantle and before which stars have shone down their bright beams. Their courtyard has not ceased to be the qebla of good fortune, towards which sons of saints all face—hope's Kaaba which is circumambulated by those whose aim is the obliterated ones. May it not cease to serve this way, so long as one star rises and the sun appears on the horizon, as a refuge for those with insight, the divine, the holy and the spiritual, enlightened and celestial ones—the silent observers, absent and present ones,* the kings in rags, the notables of all the races, those with many virtues, the guiding lights.*

Amen, Lord of the worlds! This is a prayer that will not be turned down, for it's a prayer for every kind of creature. Praise be to God, who is One, and blessings on our chief Mohammad and his family. God suffices for us; He is a generous protector.

Exordium: the song of the reed

Now listen to this reed-flute's deep lament

About the heartache being apart has meant:

'Since from the reed-bed they uprooted me

My song's expressed each human's agony,

A breast which separation's split in two

Is what I seek, to share this pain with you:

When kept from their true origin, all yearn

For union on the day they can return.

Amongst the crowd, alone I mourn my fate,

With good and bad I've learnt to integrate,

That we were friends each one was satisfied

But none sought out my secrets from inside;

My deepest secret's in this song I wail

But eyes and ears can't penetrate the veil:

Body and soul are joined to form one whole
But no one is allowed to see the soul.'
It's fire not just hot air the reed-flute's cry,
If you don't have this fire then you should die!*

Love's fire is what makes every reed-flute pine, 10
Love's fervour thus lends potency to wine;
The reed consoles those forced to be apart,
Its notes will lift the veil upon your heart,
Where's antidote or poison like its song,
Or confidant, or one who's pined so long?
This reed relates a tortuous path ahead,
Recalls the love with which Majnun's heart bled:
The few who hear the truths the reed has sung
Have lost their wits so they can speak this tongue.

The day is wasted if it's spent in grief, 15
Consumed by burning aches without relief—
Good times have long passed, but we couldn't care
When you're with us, our friend beyond compare!
While ordinary men on drops can thrive
A fish needs oceans daily to survive:
The way the ripe must feel the raw can't tell,
My speech must be concise, and so farewell!

Unchain yourself, my son, escape its hold!
How long will you remain a slave of gold?
You've tried to fit inside a jug the sea— 20
It only has a day's capacity:
A greedy eye is never satisfied,
Shells only when content grow pearls inside,
While men whose clothes are ripped to shreds by love
Are cleansed of greed like this to rise above.
Be joyful, love, our sweetest bliss is you,
Physician for all kinds of ailments too,
The cure for our conceit and stubborn pride
Like Plato here with Galen,* side by side;
Through love the earthly form soars heavenward, 25
The mountain dances nimbly like a bird:

Love made Mount Sinai drunken visibly,
 So *Moses fell and swooned** immediately!
 With my own confidant if I'd been paired,
 Just like the reed, such stories I'd have shared:
 Without a kindred spirit there to hear
 The storyteller's voice must disappear,
 And if the rose should vanish from its sight
 The nightingale* will keep its beak shut tight—
 The loved one's all, the lover's just a screen, 30
 A dead thing, while the loved one lives, unseen.
 When shunned by love you're left with emptiness,
 A bird without its wings knows such distress:
 'How can my mind stay calm this lonely night
 When I can't find here my beloved's light?'
 Love wants its tale revealed to everyone,
 But your heart's mirror won't reflect this sun,
 Don't you know why we can't perceive it here?
 Your mirror's face is rusty—scrape it clear!

*How a king fell in love with a sick slave-girl
 and tried to cure her*

Now here's a tale for you to contemplate, 35
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 There was a king, most glorious and refined,
 With spiritual and temporal power combined;
 Once he was riding on his favourite steed
 Out hunting with his friends, whom he would lead,
 When he beheld a slave-girl near the fray—
 His soul became her servant straight away!
 His old heart fluttered like a caged young bird,
 He met the asking-price without a word,
 But just when he had signed and sealed this trade 40
 By fate an illness overcame the maid:
 Like buying saddles for your mule one day
 To find that wolves have chased it far away!

Or fetching water with your finest pot
For it to smash, as if there's been a plot!
The king brought healers from all distant lands:
 'Our lives are both now in your expert hands,
My life is over till she's well again,
For she's my medicine, distinguished men;
Light of my life, whoever makes her well 45
More treasure wins than he could ever sell.'
As one they said, 'Our lives we'll sacrifice,
We will confer and seek from all advice,
We're the messiahs for the world's distress,
A salve for every wound we each possess.'
They skipped 'If God wills' through their arrogance
So God revealed through them Man's impotence:
I mean omission from inside one's heart
Not just the utterance—that's the lesser part—
Many have failed to say, 'If God should will,' 50
Although their souls were in accordance still.
The more these men produced a salve or cure
The more distress the girl seemed to endure:
That girl became much thinner than a hair,
The king wept tears of blood in his despair,
The drugs they gave her made her feel more ill
And almond oil just made her drier still,
Fruit made her constipation even worse,
Water increased the flames, as if a curse.

*The inability of the healers to cure the slave-girl becomes
apparent, and so the king turns to God at the mosque,
where he subsequently dreams about a saint*

After he watched them fail each single day 55
The king ran barefoot to the mosque to pray,
Confessing at the prayer-niche all his fears
He drenched the rug beneath him with his tears;
When from annihilation's trance he woke
With prayers the Lord he started to invoke:

'O you whose smallest gift is the whole world,
 Words can't describe this mystery you've unfurled!
 Our refuge when we find ourselves in need,
 Once more we've strayed by failing to take heed;
 You did say, "Though I know your secrets well 60
 It doesn't mean I don't want you to tell!"'
 When from his inmost depths he raised a scream,
 The sea of bounty surged and sent a dream:
 In tears, the king was overcome with sleep,
 An old man then appeared whose voice was deep:
 'Greetings, your wish is granted, humble king,
 Tomorrow to your aid our man we'll bring,
 Trust him, as one who's mastered how to cure,
 Accept his word for he's sincere and pure,
 Witness amazing magic and applaud, 65
 See in his temperament the might of God.'

The next day came, the promised meeting neared,
 The sun shone bright, the stars had disappeared,
 The king gazed from the watchtower eagerly
 To see what had been promised secretly,
 Beyond the crowd he saw a virtuous one,
 Among the shadows he was like a sun!
 Just like a crescent moon he came to view—
 A non-existent image seen by you,
 In form existing only in one's mind— 70
 The world is turned by forces of this kind:
 Their war and peace are based on fantasy,
 And shame and pride are both illusory,
 While images that saints may often love
 Are visions of the moon-faced ones above,*
 The image which while dreaming he'd just seen
 The king saw in him just as it had been,
 And so, instead of chamberlains he went
 Himself to greet this guest who had been sent.
 Both swimmers used to seas of union, 75
 Their souls without a thread were sewn as one:

‘The one I love is not that maid but you;
One thing led to another, as they do,
You’re Mostafa and I’m Omar your friend,*
Prepared to serve you till the bitter end!’

*From God, who grants success, we ask for success in
maintaining good manners always; explanation of the
harm in being ill-mannered*

Let’s pray to God for manners in their place
Since those who lack them lose out on his grace,
It’s not as though it’s just themselves they harm,
They set the world on fire, disrupt the calm:
A feast was sent down from above one day 80
Without demands or any price to pay,
Moses had men who still bemoaned their lot,
‘Why weren’t some lentils spiced with garlic brought?’
The host then cleared the feast that had been laid
And each was forced to farm with scythe and spade;
Jesus once interceded for a man,
A bounteous feast was sent down in God’s plan,
But then some greedy brats who lacked respect
Like beggars grabbed the most they could collect,
Even though Jesus cried, ‘It’s infinite, 85
You greedy fools, you’ll not run out of it!’*
Regard this lust and faithless attitude
Before God’s feast as sheer ingratitude:
When blinded by their greed these low ingrates
Cause God to shut to all his mercy’s gates:
If you withhold *zakat*,* then rain won’t fall
And fornication spreads a plague to all,
So what’s the source of your deep misery?
Acting without respect conceitedly!
Whoever fails to show respect to God 90
For robbing other men deserves the rod!
Good manners are what made the heavens bright
And angels sinless, purer than the light,

Irreverence caused eclipses of the sun
And Satan, through his pride, to be undone.

*The meeting of the king with that saint who had
appeared in his dream*

The king embraced his guest and wouldn't part,
He welcomed him like love inside his heart;
Kissing his hand and forehead fervently
He asked about his home and family
Then led him to his dais with this thought: 95
 'The greatest treasure patience here has brought!
The light of God, defence against all harm,
 Showed *patience is the key to joy and calm*:
The answer to our needs is meeting you,
 All faults you fix before we ask you to,
Translating what we keep inside our souls,
 Stretching your hand to lift those trapped in holes.
O chosen one with whom God's pleased, *don't leave*,
 For then you'd make us suffocate and grieve!
Since you're our master, he who shows disdain 100
 *Will be destroyed if he does not refrain.**
They served the feast, the king then took his hand
And led him to the harem as was planned,

The king leads that doctor to the patient so he can see how she is

Recounting all the sick girl had been through,
He sat him down so he could witness too;
Her pulse and pale complexion first he checked,
Discovering the cause through its effect.
The drugs that they'd prescribed were like a curse,
Sapping her strength and making her feel worse:
They'd failed to see the ailment deep within— 105
 God save us from what they are dabbling in!
He saw her pain, her secret was revealed,
But from the king he kept it all concealed,

Her pain was not from bile the doctor learned:
The scent of wood is from its smoke discerned;
Her grief revealed that it was from her heart—
Physically fine, her heart was torn apart:

Being a lover means your heart must ache,
No sickness hurts as much as when hearts break,
The lover's ailment's totally unique, 110
Love is the astrolabe of all we seek,
Whether you feel divine or earthly love,
Ultimately we're destined for above.
To capture love whatever words I say
Make me ashamed when love arrives my way,
While explanation sometimes makes things clear
True love through silence only one can hear:
The pen would smoothly write the things it knew
But when it came to love it split in two, 115
A donkey stuck in mud is logic's fate—
Love's nature only love can demonstrate:
Sunshine reveals its nature in each ray,
So if it's proof you want just look this way!
Shadows can indicate what's shining bright
But it's the sun which fills your soul with light,
Shadows like late-night chat make people doze,
*The moon was split** when that divine sun rose!
Eternal sun—there's nothing quite so strange,
The soul's sun has no past, it doesn't change, 120
There's only one sun there before your eyes
But similar suns you still can visualize,
The soul's sun though is from a loftier sphere,
You'll not find any similar suns down here—
How can his essence ever be perceived
For things comparable to be conceived!
When news about my Shamsoddin* first came
The heaven's highest sun withdrew through shame!

I'm now compelled through uttering Shams's name
 To tell you of his gifts and spread his fame:
 Hosamoddin has flung me by my skirt 125
 So I can breathe in scent from Joseph's shirt:*
 He asked me, 'Life-long friend, please share with me
 From your rich stock a single ecstasy,
 To raise a smile from both the land and sky,
 To make each person's soul expand and fly.'
'Don't give me duties now I've passed away,
My senses dulled, I've no clue how to pray,
For anything a drunk might sing is wrong
Whether he's meek or boastful in his song:
 Since all my veins now pulse with drunkenness* 130
 How can I represent his loftiness?
 Describing separation's torture then
 Is best postponed until we speak again.'
 He said, *'I'm hungry and must now be fed!*
"Time is a cutting sword" the Prophet said,
The sufi is the present moment's son,
 Talk of "tomorrow" sufis learn to shun—
 Are you not then a sufi as I'd thought?
 Delaying payment turns your wealth to naught!
 'The loved one's secret's best kept veiled,' I said, 135
 'Listen to it in ecstasy instead,
 The lover's secret that's been kept concealed
 Is best through tales of other loves revealed.'
 'Tell it unveiled and naked, candidly,
 You tricky man, don't try distracting me!
 Be frank and lift the veil, you ditherer,
 I wear no nightshirt when in bed with her!
 I said, 'If the beloved strips for you,
 You'll be effaced, your waist and body too!
 Please don't request what you can't tolerate: 140
 A blade of straw can't hold a mountain's weight,
 And if the sun which gives us light should near,
 All things would burn and leave no traces here—
 Don't try to make more strife for everyone,
 Ask nothing more about Tabriz's Sun!'

The tale is incomplete, begin anew,
Narrate the rest, as only you can do!

*The saint asks the king to let him spend time
alone with the slave-girl in order to
discover her ailment*

The doctor said, 'Vacate your house today,
Even your family must be sent away,
So no one's listening from the corridors 145
While I interrogate the girl indoors.'
The house was emptied, no one else remained,
Alone now with the girl who looked so pained,
He gently asked, 'From which town did you come?
The cure depends on where the patient's from;
Which relatives do you have living there,
Who's family? Whose friendship do you share?'
Feeling her pulse he went through one by one
Questions about the course the stars must run:

When someone stumbles barefoot on a thorn 150
He stops and checks what he has trod upon,
To use a needle to dislodge its head,
Or failing that, by moistening it instead:
If in your foot it proves so hard to find
Imagine one that's pierced your heart and mind!
If such thorns could be traced by any fool
How then could sorrow ever hope to rule!
If someone pricks a donkey near its tail
The helpless beast will buck and start to wail,
But this will serve to drive it further in— 155
A sage is needed to remove the pin;
The donkey would continue with its fit
And prick itself a hundred times with it!
Our thorn-removing doctor is the best,
He presses first all over as a test:

Through sharing stories with the poor sick maid
 He asked about her friends and where she'd stayed,
 And she divulged to him the history
 Of all her past friends and her family;
 While listening to what the girl would share 160
 He monitored her pulse with utmost care—
 Whoever's name would raise her pulse would be
 The one for whom she suffered constantly.
 Once she had named her friends from home, he'd then
 About another town inquire again:
 'After you left your home where did you go?
 Where did you stay the longest, let me know!'

She mentioned further places by their name,
 Her pulse and her complexion stayed the same,
 She listed every detail of each town 165
 From local bread to features of renown—
 Of town by town and home by home she'd speak
 Without a quiver in her veins or cheek,
 Her pulse felt stable to his knowing hand
 Until he asked the girl of Samarkand—
 Her pulse increased to rates beyond compare,
 She'd been kept from a certain goldsmith there!
 Once the physician solved this mystery
 He found the source of her deep agony.
 'So where precisely is this man's abode?' 170
 'It's near the bridge, on the Ghatafar road.'
 'I recognize your illness, count on me—
 My magic will provide the remedy,
 Be joyful, maiden, carefree and secure,
 As rain revives the grass, I'll find the cure!
 I'll take your suffering on, so grieve no more!
 I'm kind like fathers who their girls adore,
 Make sure to keep this secret safe with you,
 I mean in case the king should ask you too,
 For if a soul entombs its secret love 175
 Fulfilment comes more quickly from above.
 The Prophet said, "Whoever hides his dream
 Attains it sooner through the Lord Supreme":

When seeds are hidden deep beneath the ground
 Their secret turns to verdure all around,
 Silver and gold are hidden in the mine
 To nurture them and purify their shine.’
 The doctor’s soothing words and promises
 Relieved the girl of countless illnesses:
 True promises give pleasure constantly,
 False promises increase anxiety,
 The promise of the pure’s hard currency,
 The promise of the base brings bankruptcy!

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The saint identifies the affliction and explains it to the king

Then he stood up and headed for the king
To share a bit of what was happening:
‘What you must do is summon here that man,
To cure her pain this is the wisest plan:
Summon the goldsmith from that distant town,
With gold and robes of honour, bring him down!’
After this speech the king chose to obey
Each word that he had heard the healer say.

185

The king sends messengers to Samarkand to bring the goldsmith

The king then sent two men to Samarkand,
Both shrewd, experienced men at his command,
As soon as they arrived there they began
To read this message to the wanted man:
'O gentle master, pure intelligence,
Talk everywhere is of your eminence!
Our king requests you for your peerless skill,
This vacancy no other man can fill,
Accept this robe of honour and this gold,
When you arrive a special rank you'll hold.'
On seeing robes and wealth he was beguiled,
He left his townsfolk, even his own child,
He set off on the journey feeling thrilled
Without a clue the king would have him killed,

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He proudly mounted an Arabian stud,
Not knowing that the price was his own blood:
Conceited fool, you failed to comprehend,
So eagerly you raced to your own end!
He dreamt of majesty that wouldn't cease, 195
As Azrael said, 'Come and grab your piece!'

He was escorted, after entering,
Up to the royal throne to meet the king,
The escorts treated him with special care,
They knew his love of pomp—it was a snare!
The king embraced him like a friend of old,
Entrusting to him all his stores of gold,
The doctor urged, 'There's more you can award:
Why don't you give the girl as a reward? 200
Through union with this man she could be nursed,
Love's waters might revive her, quench her thirst.'
The maiden then received a wedding band—
They joined the couple just as they had planned!
The first six months together how they thrived,
The servant girl soon totally revived!
But then the groom was poisoned in a plot,
She saw the doctor's potion make him rot:
Through sickness he lost all his youthfulness,
Each day his looks got worse, her love grew less, 205
He soon became so ugly, pale, and old
That she could feel her heart becoming cold—
Love which is based on just a pretty face
Is not true love, it ends in sheer disgrace.
Would that he'd been all over so debased
And therefore spared the judgement he has faced!
Instead of tears his eyes gushed blood in streams,
His face became his enemy, it seems:
Feathers became the peacock's bitter foe
And kings were killed by their own love of show.
He said, 'I'm like the deer for whose musk scent 210
Hunters desire to catch and then torment;

The desert fox, which when they capture her,
 They chop her head off just to keep the fur;
 That elephant who's beaten savagely,
 They shed his blood just for his ivory,
 Those who would kill for secondary goals
 Should know I'll take my vengeance on their souls,
 I'm now the victim, your turn's coming soon,
 Those hungry for my blood are not immune!
 A lengthy shadow though a wall can cast;
 That shadow will return to it at last:
 The world's a mountain, actions like a shout,
 Your echo will return to you, watch out!'
 These were his final words when he was slain,
 The slave-girl now was purged of love and pain.

Love of the dead is not a lasting love
 Because the dead don't come back from above,
 Love of the living in your soul and blood
 Each moment makes you fresher than a bud,
 Save love for him, eternal and divine,
 The Saqi with the soul-expanding wine!
 Choose love of him, from whose resplendent face
 The prophets find their mission and their grace—
 Don't tell me 'From that king we have been barred,'
 Dealing with noble men is not that hard !

Explanation of how the goldsmith's murder by poisoning was in accord with God's instruction, not due to the passions and corrupt wishes of the carnal soul

Although the healer's killing seems severe,
 Be sure he didn't act through greed or fear,
 Nor to placate the king's desire instead—
 Divine command decreed he should be dead.
 Think of the child whose jugular Khezz slit,*
 Most people failed to see the good in it:

For those in deep communion with their Lord
 Their every deed's correct, in full accord,
 He who gives life may kill, we must condone
 His deputy's act like his very own;
 Like Ismail* lay your neck before his blade
 And smile for this brave sacrifice you've made,
 So that your soul will live on joyfully
 With God, like Ahmad's* soul, eternally;
 Each lover drinks the wine of his own soul 230
 When slain by his beloved that's his goal.
 The king did not start scheming through desire—
 Now throw that false suspicion in the fire!
 You still think he committed sin, don't you?
 When God refines, no flaws can filter through;
 Religious discipline and suffering loss
 Is so the furnace burns the silver's dross,
 That's why for good and bad we scrutinize
 And gold is boiled so that the scum may rise—
 So if his deeds from heaven didn't spring 235
 He'd be a dog that bites and not a king!
 Already he's been purified from greed,
 His righteous act just seemed a wicked deed:
 When Khezr destroyed that boat out in the sea
 What seemed destructive was true piety,
 Moses stayed veiled,* though he was wise and good—
 Don't jump without wings, till you've understood!
 This red's a rose and not a bloody stain,
 He's drunk with gnosis, don't call him insane,
 If shedding Muslim blood was his sole aim 240
 I'd be an infidel to bless his name!
 When evil's praised the highest heavens shake,
 If pious men applaud that's their mistake!
 He was a glorious king, and circumspect,
 Hand-picked by God, one of the pure elect,
 Whoever such a king should choose to slay
 More grace and status soon will come his way.
 If good could not be caused through violence
 How could his soul have shown such vehemence?

When children tremble near the barber's blade,*
Their mothers smile with joy though they're afraid:
For half a life he gives a hundred more,
Such gifts beyond your dreams he has in store,
So stop comparing him with your low state,
Reflect on this before it gets too late!

245

*The tale about the grocer and the parrot: the
parrot spills oil in the store*

A grocer kept a parrot in his stall,
The bird was green and talked, amusing all,
Perched on a bench it watched the passers-by,
Sharing a word with those who caught its eye,
It knew how to pronounce all human words,
Spoke fluently with men as well as birds.
The parrot hopped down from the bench one day,
Spilling a flask of rose oil on its way;
And when the grocer came back to his store,
When he sat down he stained the clothes he wore.
On seeing the spilt oil a rage took hold—
He struck the parrot's head and left it bald!
The next few days the bird refused to speak,
The grocer grieved, repentant now and meek,
He tugged his beard, 'Alas!' he cried aloud
'My sun of bounty's hidden by a cloud!
Would that my hand had broken then instead
Of striking my most precious parrot's head!'
He then gave gifts to all the needy men,
Hoping to hear the parrot speak again.
After three nights, perplexed and desperate
He sat down on the bench, disconsolate,
Then showed the parrot wondrous tricks galore
To coax it into talking back once more;
A monk then strolled by on his daily route,
In woollen garb and balder than a coot—

250
255
260

This made the parrot talk again at last.

It shouted at the monk as he walked past:

‘How did you end up such a slaphead, friend?

Did you like me a flask of oil upend?’

At this assumption everybody laughed,

It thought the monk its equal—it was daft!

Don’t you compare yourself with God’s élite,

Remember ‘souls’ just sounds like ‘soles’ of feet!

Because of this the whole world’s gone astray, 265

Few recognize God’s chosen saints today:

Themselves the prophets’ equals some proclaim

And that from saints they differ just in name,

‘We’re all mere human beings,’ they will say,

‘They too must eat some food and sleep each day.’

Their blindness stops them from discerning it—

Between the two the gap is infinite:

Both wasps and bees those flowers are nourishing,

Bees give back honey, wasps a painful sting!

All grazing deer look similar when they’re young 270

But some give musk, while others just leave dung!

They’re like the canes that you see growing there—

One’s sugar-filled, the other just holds air!

With false comparisons this world is packed,

Notice how different each one is in fact:

For one, the food he eats just turns to shit,

Another shines the light of God with it;

One eats and grows more envious and tight,

Another one bestows God’s purest light.

Contrast this good land with that marshy patch, 275

Don’t claim this angel and that demon match!

When opposites to us the same appear

Like sweet and bitter water, both being clear,

Who can discriminate between the two?

None but a man who’s tasted truth* will do.

Magic and miracles some view the same

For both to them are just a clever game:

Magicians challenged Moses, friend of God,*
 Producing their own versions of his rod—
 The difference was vast, like night and day, 280
 Their deeds contrasted, they were poles away!
 Their actions earned them curses from the Lord,
 While Moses earned more grace as his reward.
 Such unbelievers are just apes, no more,
 Their lying breasts are rotten to the core!
 Whatever men should do, apes imitate,
 They try to copy every human trait,
 Thinking, 'We've copied them so faithfully.'
 Deluded, apes can't sense the way we see.
 His actions were from God, theirs just a game, 285
 Those who keep picking fights should all feel shame!
 Although the hypocrites attend the prayer,
 It's just so they can start a quarrel there,
 In fasting, prayer, the pilgrimage, and alms,
 These hypocrites make good men take up arms!
 Believers will be led to victory,
 While hypocrites will pay eternally!
 Although it's the same game these two groups play,
 They're chalk and cheese, like those from Merv and Rey.*
 Each one where he belongs at last you'll find, 290
 Since each fulfils the name he's been assigned,
 If called *believer*, he'll end up much higher;
 Those labelled *hypocrite* just feed the fire!
 His essence earns the first *loved one* as name,
 His failings give the next, *the loathed*, all blame.
 The name 'believer' is itself worth naught,
 It only signifies a person's thought;
 Call someone hypocrite and he'll protest
 As if a scorpion's stung him in his chest,
 'If this vile name has not emerged from hell, 295
 Why then does it possess its taste and smell?'
 The word's referent letters don't decide—
 Don't blame the bowl for what's contained inside!
 The bowl's mere form, its content meaning, look!
 All meaning's from *the Mother of the Book*:*

The planet's different seas aren't joined as one,
 God's fixed *a gap they don't encroach upon*,*
 Their origin however's still the same,
 Transcend them all and make their source your aim!

To check that it's not counterfeit you'll need 300
 A touchstone to be sure it's gold indeed:
 If God should place a touchstone in your heart
 You'll then tell doubt and certainty apart,
 Like when a hair gets in your mouth you know
 To spit it out before it slips below,
 Among a hundred morsels just one hair,
 Each man can sense it if he should take care!
 These senses are the ladders of this world,
 From heaven separate ladders God has hurled.
 Physicians treat and keep your body well 305
 But just God's friend can save your soul from hell,
 Good health's equated with a strong physique,
 A healthy soul will make your body weak;
 Bodies are wrecked along the mystic way,
 For their destruction treasure's brought as pay:
 For gold your house is knocked down to the ground
 To be rebuilt, foundations deep and sound,
 He cuts off water, drains the river bed,
 With purest water fills it up instead;
 He flays your skin to find the blade inside, 310
 Fresh skin will heal the wound, however wide;
 He'll raze the castles of those faithless powers
 But then rebuild them with a thousand towers.
 Who can discern when acts seem arbitrary?
 What I've just said shows that it's necessary:
 Sometimes like this, and then the opposite,
 God's way bewilders those who're travelling it,
 Not the false ways of those whose backs are turned,
 But the amazement that love's drunks have learned:
 One faces the beloved constantly, 315
 The other chooses just himself to see—

Observe which way the people choose to turn,
While serving others learn how to discern!
The devils make themselves look just like men—
Don't shake hands with just anyone again:
The hunter blows a whistle near his prey,
Deceiving thus the bird, who's led astray,
It hears what sounds like calling from a friend
And lands inside his trap to meet its end;
A wretch may steal the words of dervishes 320
To chant tall tales to simple audiences:
The actions of the genuine spread light,
While false pretenders just distort what's right.
Low beggars with stuffed dolls they feel no shame:
'Ahmad', some claimed, was Bu Mosaylem's* name:
He was called 'liar' soon, and entered hell,
While Ahmad gave the world *those who know well*.
The wine of love's flask smells of musk that's pure,
While other wines all stink of foul manure!

*The story about the Jewish king who out of
fanaticism would kill Christians*

There once was an oppressive Jewish king, 325
A foe of Jesus and his following
During the period of his prophethood,
Succeeding Moses, as we've understood—
The cross-eyed king saw them as miles apart
Although as prophets they were one at heart:

A teacher told a cross-eyed boy one day,
'Go fetch for me a bottle straight away!'
The boy returned, 'Which bottle did you mean
Of that exactly matching pair I've seen?'
The teacher said, 'There's only one you fool! 330
Have you not learned to add up yet at school?'

The boy protested, 'Sir, don't laugh at me!
 The teacher said, 'Try smashing one to see!
 A single bottle looked to him like two
 But when one broke, both vanished from his view!
 When he smashed one the other broke as well,
 Desire can make you cross-eyed in its spell!
 And lust and rage don't just affect your sight,
 They agitate your soul, set it alight,
 Virtue's forgotten when your heart feels lust, 335
 Veils block your heart and eyes like layers of dust,
 So when a judge lets bribery win his heart
 He can't tell guilt and innocence apart.

This king became so cross-eyed through his hate,
 The Christians prayed, 'Save us from his dictate!'
 He slew believers, claimed it was correct,
 Said, 'Moses's faith I have to protect!'

The vizier informs the king of his plot

He had an infidel vizier, so sly
 That he convinced men even when he'd lie!
 He said, 'The Christians want to save their lives, 340
 They see that he who hides his faith survives—
 Don't round them up, that method won't work well,
 You can't tell people's faith just by their smell!
 They've hidden their beliefs inside a sheath,
 What smiles at you opposes you beneath.'
 The king said, 'Tell me what you recommend
 To wipe out those who play-act and pretend,
 To rid this world of every Christian soul,
 Hidden or in the open—that's my goal!
 He said, 'Cut off my nose and hands, dear king, 345
 And split my lip to show my suffering,
 Then hang me from the gallows publicly
 Till someone comes to intercede for me,

Set all this up inside the market square
So people flock to see from everywhere,
Then banish me to exile far away
And I'll make mischief for them from that day!

How the vizier deceives the Christians

I'll say, "I've been a Christian in disguise—
All-knowing God will prove these are not lies:
When he found out my true identity 350
That bigot of a king came after me!
To keep my faith a secret from that king
I'd mimic his own brand of worshipping,
But when he did get wind of my belief
Of wicked crimes he charged me like a thief,
Saying, "Your words are needles in my spine!
A window lies between your heart and mine
Through which upon your secrets I can spy,
And so your false claims I'll no longer buy."
If Jesus had not saved me from that Jew 355
He would have butchered me, I swear to you,
For Christ I'd therefore sacrifice my head
And pay back all my debts before I'm dead;
Though I would gladly die for our Lord's sake,
I've studied, so it would be a mistake—
To risk the future of our faith's not right
Though under heathens we have such a fight!
Thanks be to God and Jesus, this I pray,
That I've become a guide to lead the way,
That I've escaped the cruel, oppressive Jews 360
To wear my Christian girdle when I choose!
This is the epoch of our Holy Lord,
Hear now his secrets, live in full accord!"'
The king did what was needed to destroy
All Christian families with their hidden ploy:
He started to expel them from his land
When the vizier began to preach, as planned.

The Christians are taken in by the vizier's plot

A thousand Christians gradually thus converged
 Around his home, where they all finally merged,
 He'd teach them secretly, the old and youths, 365
 About the gospel, prayer, and hidden truths;
 Although he seemed to teach mere ordinances
 He led to hidden traps his audiences:
 That's why a few Companions* would enquire
 About the self's tricks and its true desire,
 'Dear Prophet, tell us what's its hidden goal
 In worship and in purifying one's soul?'
 From the self's piety they sought no grace
 But errors in its acts they sought to trace,
 Its every lie they quickly learned to see, 370
 To tell rose stems from sticks of celery!
 Companions who knew how to scrutinize
 The prophet's sermons still would mesmerize.

The Christians follow the vizier

So all the Christians gave their hearts to him
 Too ready to obey another's whim!
 Submission to him they thought piety,
 Imagining he was Christ's deputy:
 He was the one-eyed Antichrist within—
 Please help us God, protector from all sin!
 He's set for us a hundred thousand traps 375
 And we're like hungry birds in search of scraps,
 Each moment caught in yet another snare
 Though we be phoenixes who rule the air,
 You free us, but repeatedly we fall,
 Entrapped, 'O Needless One', for you we call:
 Like bringing wheat inside a farmhouse store
 But at the same time losing it once more!
 Why can't we work this out now with our brains?
 A mouse keeps sneaking in to steal the grains!

This mouse has dug a hole to creep inside, 380
It's ruined every storehouse far and wide—
Defend against the mouse first, that's the plan,
Then come and gather all the wheat you can!
Now listen to the Prophet of Mankind:
'No prayer's complete without a present mind.'
Tell me, If there's none left inside your store
Then where's the stock of forty years and more?
Why isn't every grain of daily prayer
Still in the storehouse, since you put them there?
The anvil sent up sparks at rapid pace, 385
Impassioned hearts received them in embrace,
But then a thief crept in when it was dark
And placed his finger over every spark:
He put each spark out in this heart of mine
Until the heavens could no longer shine,
But even if such snares encircle me
I feel no fear when you stand next to me:
When constantly your favour gives relief
How can I fear at all that wretched thief!

Out of the human body's trap each night 390
To serve as tablets for the truths you write:
You free our spirits from confinement's cage,
No longer slaves, they reach the highest stage!
Prisoners at night forget about their chains
And sultans think no more of their domains,
No loss or profit, nor a moment's stress,
About our foes one couldn't now care less!
The mystic's in this state while wide awake:
God said, *'They're sleeping'*,* so make no mistake!
Asleep to worldly things all night and day, 395
Just like a pen, God's hand he must obey—
Those who don't see the movement by His hand
Think that the pen moves by its own command.
Some clues about the mystic God's made plain
Since sleeping also stills the simple brain:

Their souls transcend to realms beyond compare
 Where souls and bodies rest without a care,
 Though with a whistle He will call them home
 When they'll be judged and can no longer roam.
 Once dawn's first light from heaven should appear 400
 The golden sun would overwhelm this sphere,
 Like Esrafil, *He who makes each dawn break**
 Brings back all human spirits wide awake,
 Inside their bodies they are trapped by day
 As if the body's pregnant in this way.
 Thus he strips trappings off the spirit's steed—
 'Brother of death' for sleep is apt indeed!
 In order that by dawn they all come back
 He's tied a tether round them, though it's slack,
 To draw them in from meadows to their pen 405
 Where they are burdened with their loads again;
 Protected like Companions of the Cave,*
 Or safe, on Noah's ark, from every wave,
 If only souls were spared from being aware
 Of what our mind and senses see out there!
 Companions of the Cave today are found,
 They're right before you and heard all around
 In song with the beloved constantly—
 Your eyes don't have the power though to see.

The tale about the caliph seeing Layli*

The caliph said to Layli, 'You're the one 410
 Who's left Majnun bewildered and undone,
 But you don't seem remarkable to me!
 She said, 'You need Majnun's own eyes to see!
 To be awake to this world means to sleep,
 It's worse than sleep in fact, and much more deep!
 Asleep to God, awake to spectacles—
 This represents the worst of obstacles;
 We're kicked and punched by fantasies all day
 From fear of loss to hope of higher pay,

Our souls thus lose their grace and purity 415
 To block the path above for you and me.
The one asleep believes in fantasies
 And dozes off seduced by what he sees:
A demon for a houri* he'll mistake,
 In lust ejaculating for its sake!
Once he has spilt his semen thus in vain
 He'll wake up, but his dream shall not remain—
His weakness his own body has defiled,
 So he'll regret that he had been beguiled.
A bird flies past, its shadow slides below 420
 As if it can itself move to and fro,
A foolish hunter chases this all day,
 Thinking it's real he seeks it as his prey,
Not knowing it's a shadow of the bird—
 About this simple fact he had not heard—
He shoots this shadow with his hunting bow,
 Empties his quiver for a phantom show!
Just like his quiver soon his life runs dry,
 Wasted pursuing shadows, days pass by!
But when the shade of God heals like a nurse 425
 It frees one from that empty shadow's curse;
This shade's beneath each of God's chosen slaves,
 To this world dead, his life for God he saves,
Forget your doubts and follow this man's lead
 So at the end of time you might be freed!
*How he makes shadows stretch** shows this is right
 For saints are proof of the Divine Sun's light;
Without a saint as guide, don't enter yet,
 Like Abraham *don't love the ones that set*;
Leave shadows for the sunshine, and then seize 430
 The cloak's hem worn by King Shams-e Tabriz!
If you can't find the banquets where he's been
 Then ask the light of truth, Hosamoddin!
But if sheer envy grabs your throat, beware,
 The devil's the most envious one out there!
Through jealousy, he's shown contempt for Man,
 He'll try to end our joy if he still can;

No harder road's on this itinerary,
 You're blessed if from this jealousy you're free!
 The body serves as home for jealousies 435
 When what's inside is struck by this disease;
 Although it's home to jealousies, be sure
 That God has made the body to be pure,
 For *Sanctify my house** confirms it's right
 And earthly talismans can bring you light.
 Don't cheat those free from envy in their souls,
 Your heart will blacken like the darkest coals,
 Become instead the dirt on which they tread,
 Bury, like us, your mean and envious head!

Explanation of the vizier's jealousy

That base vizier, the spawn of jealousies, 440
 Wasting his faculties on vanities,
 Hoped that his bitter envy's poisonous breath
 Would make the souls of poor men meet their death:
 If out of envy men turn up their nose
 They'll lose their nose for striking such a pose,
 Each person's nose is there to breathe in scent
 And one can send you to the firmament:
 Whoever lacks it must forsake his nose,
 This holy scent through which the spirit grows,
 And should he catch a whiff, but not sing praise 445
 His nose will be devoured for his sick ways,
 Therefore give thanks and serve all grateful folk,
 To live on, be as dead as dust and smoke!
 Don't waylay others like this sly vizier,
 From ritual prayer don't tempt away those near!
 He acted holy, but he was a fake,
 Like using garlic on an almond cake!

The perceptive Christians see through the vizier's plot

Judging his words with taste-buds well refined
 A few sensed sweet and bitter were combined:

He'd mixed the words of saints with those of cheats, 450
Like hiding poison in amongst the sweets,
He seemed to say, 'Stand firm while on the way!'
But to their souls, 'Be weak!' he'd really say:
Although the silver's surface shines like new
It makes your hand turn black, your jacket too,
Though fire by yellow flames each man discerns
Watch how it turns to black all things it burns,
Though lightning helps us see by shining bright
It's also known for robbing men of sight.
For those who didn't know how they could check 455
His words became a halter round their neck!
The six years he spent absent from his king
To Christians he claimed safety he would bring—
People surrendered heart and soul to him,
They would have died to satisfy his whim!

The king corresponds secretly with the vizier

But with the king he still would correspond,
The king wrote secretly, thus kept their bond:
With this aim finally he wrote: that they
Like worthless dust should soon be blown away:
'Of all my ministers you are the best, 460
Now it's the time to put my mind at rest.'
He answered, 'Please observe, your majesty,
The strife I've caused for Christianity.'

Explanation of the twelve divisions of the Christians

The Christians had agreed a leading role
For twelve of them to whom they gave control:
Each Christian group chose one and then obeyed
Expecting that through him they'd be repaid;
But through their leaders, whom they'd all revere,
They also came to follow this vizier:
Trusting that through his teachings they'd be saved 465
They'd imitate the way this man behaved,

And every leader would have gladly died
 To please this man whom they all glorified.

The vizier deliberately mixes up the ordinances of the Bible

To every tribe he sent a document,
 But what each scroll contained was different:
 They each set separate rules to be obeyed
 And contradicted points the others made:
 In one it said, 'The fast and discipline
 Are needed for repentance to begin.'
 The next said, 'Discipline's no use to you: 470
 Resort to being liberal, as I do.'
 Another: 'Fasting and asceticism
 Both really are a form of polytheism,
 You should have trust in fate, abandon cares!
 In ease and hardship, all you'll find are snares!'
 In one he wrote, 'God's service is a must
 To prove beyond a doubt your total trust.'
 The next said, 'End proscription and command,
 It's just to show we're weak that things are banned:
 Once we've observed our weakness through their light 475
 We'll then appreciate God's power and might.'
 The next one said, 'Ignore your weaknesses,
 Don't be ungrateful for God's kindnesses:
 Give thanks for strength and sing his praise aloud,
 Of God's most generous gifts you should be proud!'
 The next one said, 'Don't look at either one:
 Things visible are idols you must shun.'
 The next said, 'Don't blow out this candle's flame,
 Vision of union shines bright just the same:
 Your mental visions mustn't be wiped out, 480
 At midnight no one blows the candle out!'
 The next one said, 'Just blow it out, don't grieve,
 And in return great visions you'll receive:
 Extinguish it to make your soul expand,
 Layli will ask Majnun then for his hand:

Renounce the world now on your own accord
And it will seek you out to be its lord!
The next one said, 'What God has brought to view
He's made look good especially for you:
It's for your sake, accept it happily, 485
Don't choose to wallow in your misery!
The next one said, 'Abandon what you own,
Since what the self desires you can't condone!
Each path seems easily followed to the goal
So each one loves his sect more than his soul,
But if the path were open to each creed
Then Jews and Magians also could succeed.'
The next said, 'This is all I know for sure,
The soul's food is what makes your heart endure:
Our sensual tasting's transient, like blown sand, 490
And nothing ever grows from barren land:
Its produce is regret for farming it,
Its sale results in a huge deficit,
It gives no beneficial fruit at all
So as 'deficient' it is known to all,
Choose what is favourable from what is not
To know the end-result before it's sought!
'Seek out a trusty guide,' the next one said,
'You can't tell what's in front just by your head!
Each sect had thought that they could see the goal 495
Then fell in error deep inside a hole!
If everyone could know what to expect
There wouldn't be disputes between each sect.'
The next said, 'You're the perfect guide, please rise,
For others only you can recognize,
Become a man, don't be a foolish clown,
Hold up your head, don't turn your gaze back down!
The next said, 'All around is unity,
Just cross-eyed wretches see duality!
The next said, 'How can millions equal one? 500
That's just what madmen like to claim for fun!
And so their rivals' views each group would blame,
One's meat and poison never judged the same:

Until you can transcend the differences
 You'll never breathe in union's fragrances;
 Such different scrolls, each written in this style,
 The foe of Jesus wrote with all his guile.

*Explanation of how the differences are apparent in form,
 but not in the reality of the way*

Not seeing Jesus's one-colouredness
 About his vat of dye he didn't guess:*
 A multi-coloured garment placed in there 505
 Comes out one-coloured, clearer than the air,
 Not that one-colouredness which seems a bore
 But like pure water which all fish adore:
 A thousand colours decorate the land
 But dryness on the shore no fish can stand,
 So who's the fish and what is water here
 That the Almighty should like them appear!
 Thousands of fish and seas lie down prostrate
 Before the Lord, obeying his dictate!

How many rains have poured down filled with grace 510
 And scattered pearls up from the ocean's base,
 And through His grace how many suns have shone
 The clouds and seas with care to smile upon:
 A ray of knowledge shone on soil and clay
 To teach them how to nurture seeds this way,
 Such ground is pure no matter what you sow,
 Without a defect plants will quickly grow,
 Its soundness comes from the primordial trust*—
 That's why it gets its light from the All-Just,
 But spring must give a signal from the Lord 515
 Before the soil reveals its hidden horde.
 He's given to inanimate things too
 Knowledge, a trust and rectitude—it's true!
 His grace schools even things without a mind,
 His wrath leaves educated scholars blind!

Your heart and soul can't take the heat at all,
No ears to hear these truths, whom shall I call?
He changes every ear into an eye
And every stone into a gem you'd buy,
Compared with this what then is alchemy! 520
Next to His miracles what's sorcery!
My uttering praise is really ceasing praise,
It proves my being—what I must erase!
Before His being please leave yours behind!
What is our own existence, blue and blind:
Except the blind, all melt before his feet
The moment that the sun emits its heat,
And if from mourning it has not turned blue*
How come it's freezing standing next to you!

How the vizier lost his way in his plot

The king's vizier, like him a heedless fool, 525
Sought to contest divine eternal rule,
To punch Almighty God, who out of naught,
In moments, worlds like ours to life has brought!

A hundred worlds in seconds He'll display
When your own eyes, through Him, can look this way;
To you this world seems vast and limitless,
To Him compared with atoms it's worth less.
This world's a gaol, your souls are locked inside,
Head that way for the open countryside!
This world has limits, that one's limit-free, 530
Form is a barrier to reality:
The thousand spears of Pharaoh Moses knew,
With just one rod how to split them in two;
Medical sciences once Galen taught
But next to Jesus's breath* they're worth naught;
The finest poetry was put to shame
The day illiterate Mohammad came—

With such an overwhelming lord, how then
 Can you not die unless you're wretched men!
 Men's hearts like Sinai fall drunk at His words, 535
 He hangs up by their claws such clever birds—
 To hone the intellect is not the way,
 The destitute alone the king will pay!
 Truth's treasure-hunters with their stores of gold
 The foolish thought were donkeys they could scold:
 How can a donkey be compared with you,
 As if you have a tail and four legs too!
 Sins made a woman's olive face turn white,
 But God made her like Venus shining bright:*
 This change in her was a great transformation, 540
 While turning back to clay is degradation!
 Your spirit urged you to the highest sphere,
 You've turned to clay instead by falling here,
 Transformed yourself by sinking from above
 From an existence that great men would love;
 The value of this change of course below
 Compared with her change is extremely low:
 You urged ambition's steed towards the sun
 But then snubbed Adam, the most honoured one,*
 Despite the fact you're Adam's progeny— 545
 How long will you think baseness majesty!
 'I'll rule a world,' how long will you declare,
 'And let my massive ego fill the air!'
 The world each year gets covered up with snow
 Until it's melted by the sun's warm glow:
 His sins, like those of any sly vizier,
 With just one spark from God soon disappear;
 To wisdom God can turn what idiots think
 And poisoned water to a wholesome drink!
 The cause of doubts He turns to certainty, 550
 To love He changes spite and enmity,
 Like saving Abraham from flames that roar*
 He'll change fear to security once more;
 He burnt all logic, leaving me ecstatic,
 While idle fancies just made you a sceptic!

The vizier devises another plot to lead the people astray

Then the vizier devised another plot,
Retreated from the Christians whom he'd taught
And set his students' longing hearts ablaze
By staying there for more than forty days.
Pining for him the people all went mad, 555
Missing tales of experiences he'd had;
They'd all lament and then they'd supplicate
While in seclusion he would simply wait:
They said, 'Without you we have lost the light,
With blind men lacking guides we share this plight!
For God's sake and to spare us, we implore,
Don't keep your distance from us any more!
We're children needing you as nursing-maid,
Spread over us your calm, protective shade.'
He said, 'Dear lovers, though my soul is near, 560
It's not permitted to step out of here.'
The twelve group-leaders tried to intercede
While his disciples wept in desperate need:
'Master, what a misfortune for us all,
Orphaned of love and faith, and left to fall!
You give excuses while we suffer pain,
Our burning hearts breathe desperate sighs in vain;
Accustomed to the marvellous way you teach
We now need daily doses of your speech—
For God's sake, please don't torture us this way, 565
Our needs until tomorrow don't delay!
Have you the heart to leave us in this strife,
Barren without you, robbed of our own life?
Don't leave us writhing just like fish on land,
Open the floodgates with your generous hand!
Since in this age you're totally unique,
For God's sake, give your people what they seek!'

The vizier's rebuttal of the disciples

He said, 'Heed well you easily influenced men
 Longing for preaching and advice again,
 Plug up your baser senses' ears, be wise, 570
 Unbind the senses' blindfold from your eyes!
 Ears in your head plug up the spirit's ear
 So that those ears themselves no longer hear,
 Hearing, all thought and senses you must spurn
 So you will hear when God tells you, "*Return!*"*
 If you pay heed to what the idle say
 You'll have no clue what truthful dreams convey:
 While outward travelling lies in words and deeds
 Beyond the sky the inner journey leads,
 While bodily senses only know things dry, 575
 Like Jesus, over water souls pass by;
 The body's journey takes place on dry land
 While souls dive into seas when they expand,
 But since the land is all you've ever known,
 The barren mountains, desert sand, and stone,
 You'll not find Water of Eternal Life,*
 Nor part the waves like butter with a knife;
 From dryness come vain thoughts and contemplation,
 From seas effacement, thanks, annihilation,
 While you are drunk you're far from ecstasy, 580
 The actual goblet drunks can't even see,
 Your outward talk's worth less than dust, take heed—
 Maintaining silence now is what you need!'

The disciples ask him again to end his seclusion

They said, 'O sage who loves such loopholes, please
 Stop torturing us like this, and please don't tease!
 Give every mule a load that it can bear,
 Observe the limits of the weak, be fair!
 Each bird's own seed provides its every need,
 For birds you don't put out your figs as feed!

Instead of milk if you give babies bread 585
You're bound to find the helpless creatures dead,
But later when each baby's teeth have grown
They'll ask for bread and eat it on their own;
When fledglings start to practise how to fly
They're easy prey for cats they hobble by,
But once their wings have grown they'll fly in peace
Without the need for prompting or release.
Demons are stunned to silence by your speech,
Your words bring wisdom's truths within our reach,
When you should speak our ears hear consciously, 590
Since you're the ocean we become a sea!
Earth's better now than heaven since you're near,
It's you who makes the world so bright and clear—
For us, without you heaven has no light,
To be compared with you it has no right!
Though heaven has the form of loftiness,
Its essence only spirits can possess,
Though outward greatness is each body's aim,
Next to the essence, form is just a name.'

The vizier's answer that he won't end his seclusion

'Cut short your proofs,' the sly vizier then said, 595
'Let these words penetrate your skulls instead:
If I'm the truthful one, abandon doubt,
Even if, "Sky is land!" you hear me shout!
If I am perfect, you can't disagree,
And if I'm not, then why keep pestering me?
I won't leave my seclusion from all cares,
I'm busy now with spiritual affairs!'

The disciples object to the vizier's seclusion

They said, 'It's not that we're refuting you,
Our words don't give a stranger's point of view;
Deprived of union mournfully we cry, 600
In unison our tortured spirits sigh:

A child which never argues with its nurse
 Cries, but can't tell what's better and what's worse.
 We're like a harp you pluck in various ways,
 This sad lament's not ours, it's you who plays,
 We're like the flute whose music you blow out,
 The mountain which must echo what you shout,
 Chess-pieces, winning now, and now in mate:
 It's you, majestic one, who seals our fate!
 Who are we, soul of souls, that we should sit
 Beside a man like you when we're unfit?

605

Non-entities, we're forced to fade away,
 Eternal One, our transience you display,
 We're just like lions men paint on their flag
 Who only charge when wind should make it sag:
 Our charge is visible, while wind is not—
 May that which is invisible be sought!
 This wind, our very being, blows from You,
 You brought to life our whole existence too:
 When You showed non-existence Being's light,
 It gave itself to You, love at first sight!
 Such great attractions please don't gather up,
 Nor take away the wine and drinking-cup,*
 For if You take them who can challenge You—
 Paintings can't tell their artist what to do!
 Don't gaze at us, nor look on secretly,
 Witness instead your generosity:
 We were not there, and we made no demands,
 You heard our prayer before we raised our hands!
 The fabric hanging in the weaver's loom
 Is helpless like a child inside the womb,
 The people at the court before His might,
 Like cloth before the needle, cannot fight:
 Sometimes it sews a demon, then a man,
 Sometimes sheer joy then pain is in its plan,
 Cloth has no hands to save itself from it,
 Nor tongue to tell its harm and benefit.

610

615

Read out from the Koran that verse we know
Where God says, *When you threw you did not throw!**
When we fire arrows don't give us the blame— 620
We're just the bow, it's God who's taking aim!
Don't dwell on our compulsion, but His might,
To know humility keep this in sight,
Our wretchedness confirms this further still
While feeling shame just proves we have free will:
If we're not free to choose then why feel shame,
Express regret and grief, and take the blame?
And why should students strive and teachers guide,
Why does the mind shove fate's decree aside?
And if you say, 'He's blind to fate and proud, 625
The moon of truth is covered by a cloud',
This is the answer if you've ears to hear—
Quit unbelief, and faith will make things clear:
When you fall ill you grieve and feel so low,
You're then awake to what you need to know,
When starting to feel sick your prayers begin,
You beg forgiveness for a life of sin,
Its ugliness the Lord to you displays
So you'll resolve to follow righteous ways:
You swear to God that you'll at last take heed 630
And make your every act a pious deed,
That being sick can heal you thus makes sense,
It wakes you with increased intelligence!
So heed this principle and never doubt,
Whoever's suffering pain has worked this out:
The more awake they are the worse their plight,
Their suffering turns their tortured faces white!
Before His power where's your humility,
Admit that you're a slave to His decree!
How can a man who's chained feel joy and ease 635
Or prisoners do exactly as they please?
And when your feet are shackled like a slave
While officers make sure that you behave,
Don't proudly seek from weaker men respect—
For poor souls being humble's more correct!

When you don't see His power, don't claim you do!
 Or prove it if you really have a clue!
 In every act with which you're satisfied
 You give yourself the credit with such pride,
 But when your actions make you blush with shame 640
 You say, 'He forced me; God's the one to blame!'

Prophets in this world follow God's command
 While infidels receive in hell what's planned:
 In heaven, prophets have free will, that's clear,
 But fools will claim it for themselves right here!
 Since every bird will fly to its own kind,
 Its soul ahead, the body dragged behind,
 Hell's dungeons are where infidels belong
 For in this world the prison's where they throng;
 Prophets belong to heaven, that's their goal, 645
 That's why they seek the depths of every soul—
 This talk is incomplete, but anyhow
 Let's finish the main narrative right now.

*The vizier makes the disciples give up hope of
his ending his seclusion*

Then the vizier cried out from his locked cell,
 'Now listen well to what I have to tell:
 Jesus has issued this command to me
 To separate from friends and family,
 To face the wall and sit here all alone,
 Renouncing life, and that includes my own:
 From now on I've no right to even speak 650
 Let alone teach the wisdom that you seek,
 I'm dead from now on, friends, so it's goodbye,
 I'm taking my belongings to the sky!
 In order not to burn like wood in hell,
 Enduring blame and hardship there as well,
 I'll sit with Jesus from now on up there
 In heaven's summit, like a perfect pair.'

*The vizier's appointment of each one of the
group-leaders as his successor*

He summoned each group-leader on his own
To privately divulge what Christ had shown:
He said to each one, 'Christ has chosen you 655
As my sole heir and God's own spokesman too;
The other leaders are your deputies,
You should consider them your own trainees,
If one of them should grumble or protest
Kill him, or put him under house-arrest!
But don't disclose this while I'm still the head,
Don't seek my role until I'm finally dead,
Until that time, act like you haven't heard,
Don't make a claim, nor breathe a single word!
Inside this scroll is Jesus's decree— 660
Recite it then to his community!
To each of them he said, 'This is your role,
There's no one else who can assume control.'
He treated each one like a special king,
And promised each of them the same old thing;
To each he gave a separate scroll he'd signed
With different rules as if God changed his mind!
Discrepancies in them were easily read,
As different as the letters A to Z,
Each contradicted what the rest declared, 665
Already news about this ploy I've shared.

The vizier's suicide in seclusion

He stayed apart a further forty days
Then killed himself to flee his own vile ways,
When people heard the news they moaned and screamed,
For some, the end of time had come, it seemed:
Towards his grave they came in disbelief
And pulled their hair, and ripped their clothes in grief!

Who knows how many came in those first weeks,
 Including Arabs, Turks, the Kurds, and Greeks!
 They kissed his grave's soil, thinking it was pure, 670
 Redemptive suffering they sought as their cure:
 For one whole month the crowds wept tears of blood,
 Creating round his grave a massive flood.

*The followers of Jesus ask their leaders,
 'Which one of you is his successor?'*

After a month had passed in bitter grief,
 The people asked, 'Who now can serve as chief?
 Which one do we consider up to it
 To swear allegiance to him and submit?
 We've roasted, but the sun has left no trace—
 Don't we now need a torch to take its place?'

When union with the Lord has left our sight 675
 We need to be reminded of His might,
 Like when the fragrant rose's life is spent
 Rose water lets us still breathe in its scent;
 God won't reveal himself although He lives
 So prophets serve as representatives,
 They're not apart from what they represent—
 That's incorrect, it's not what I first meant:
 They seem distinct if to their form you're tied,
 Discerning eyes can tell they're unified.
 You're seeing double if their form's your aim, 680
 Observe their light, you'll see that it's the same!
 Who can discern his own eyes' share of light
 When it's this light which gives each man his sight:
 If you light up ten lamps when there's a storm
 Each differs from the other in its form,
 But no one still can separate their light
 Which makes the space around you clear and bright;
 You now see countless apples in the cart
 But once they're crushed you can't tell them apart:

The spirit's realm has no plurality, 685
Division, individuality;
This union of the lovers waits for you,
Hold on, don't let its form obstruct your view,
Melt stubborn form through hardship and be bold
And you'll find unity beneath like gold!
If you don't melt it, then his kindness will,
The master of our hearts supports us still:
He shows his face inside your happy heart
And sews the Sufi cloak that's torn apart.
Like one expansive whole was our past state, 690
Beyond one could not differentiate,
The same throughout in form just like the sun,
Like water, clear and still as if it's one;
When it took form that pure light multiplied
Like shadows of the battlements outside—
Demolish all of them my faithful troop,
Erase the differences among this group!
I would have clarified this all, my friend,
Had I not feared you wouldn't comprehend,
These points are finer than a sabre's tip, 695
Escape, if you've no shield yet in your grip!
Without a shield don't try to hold your own,
In murder this cruel blade no shame has shown,
I've put my own sword in its sheath again
So my intentions aren't misread by men;
Now let's complete the story rapidly
About those godly Christians' loyalty:
After their teacher died they tried to find
Someone to fill the role he'd left behind.

The struggle between the leaders over successorship

One of the leaders stepped up, tall and proud, 700
Before the faithful and expectant crowd,
He said, 'I'm the successor of that sage
To represent Lord Jesus in this age,

This scroll is evidence for all to see
That his inheritance belongs to me!
But from the crowd another leader came,
His claim to be successor just the same:
He held a scroll too under his right arm—
In rage they cursed and wished each other harm!
In turn, the other leaders made their way, 705
Drawing their gleaming swords to join the fray,
Each held a scroll and sabre in the maul,
Like drunken elephants they'd swing and fall;
Thousands of Christian bodies soon lay dead
And mounds were formed by gathering each one's head,
Just like a flood their blood spilled all around,
Enormous clouds of dust rose from the ground.
Dissension's seed which that vizier had sown
Produced such tragedies that chill the bone;
Their walnut bodies soon were split and cracked, 710
Only the purest kernels stayed intact.

Death's what the body's nature seems to fit
As pomegranates must be crushed and split:
The sweet ones turn to syrup, pure and good,
The rotten just make sounds like lumps of wood,
Those with pure spirits finally see His face
While rotten ones will only find disgrace.
Don't worship form, but look for loftier things
Because the spirit gives the body wings,
Keep company with those who're spiritual 715
To gain His grace and be more liberal.

A body which does not contain a soul
Is like a sheath that holds a wooden pole,
While hidden in the sheath it might seem good,
But burning is the only use for wood,
With just a wooden sword don't join this fight,
Check first, or you'll regret your wretched plight:

If yours is wooden, change it straight away,
But if it's razor-sharp then join the fray!
Saints have such swords among their armory, 720
Just seeing them for you is alchemy—
Listen to this description once again:
He is *a mercy to the world of men*.^{*}
Buy pomegranates that the grocer's split
So that its mouth will show the seeds in it,
For generous laughter shows us openly
The heart, a pearl within the spirit's sea,
The tulip's laughter though displays its sin—
Its mouth reveals the darkness deep within.
Whole gardens bloom when pomegranates smile: 725
To be like mystics stay with them awhile,
For even if you should be made from stone,
Through mystics as a jewel you'll soon be known;
Plant love of saints now firmly in your heart,
Submit your soul to those who'll never part,
While there's still hope don't wallow in despair,
Why choose the dark when there's a sun up there?
Your heart will lead you to the mystic way,
Your body drags you to its cell of clay,
So give your heart food from those in accord— 730
Seek fortune from the ones who know their lord!

*Veneration of the description of the Prophet Mohammad
which was included in the gospels*

Inside the gospel was Mohammad's name,
The soul of prophecy who's free from blame:
Accounts of his appearance it contained,
His battles, fasts, and diet it explained;
A Christian sect, for their own benefit,
On reading his most glorious name in it
Would kiss the text and raise it to their head,
Respecting what the holy gospel said:

In all this latest strife that group were saved 735
 From terror, for the good way they behaved,
 And from the evil of that sly vizier,
 Protected by his name, which they held dear;
 Their offspring flourished, fortune didn't end,
 Mohammad's light became their helpful friend.
 The other Christian groups made no attempt—
 They held the name Mohammad in contempt,
 So they met shame and suffering so severe
 From seeds of evil sown by that vizier:
 Their faith was tampered with,* it's not the same, 740
 Those false, misleading scrolls are all to blame!
 From Ahmad's name you can gain such support,
 His light gives help of a much higher sort,
 His name's a fort that foes can't penetrate—
 Imagine then his truthful spirit's state!

*The story of another Jewish king who tried to
destroy the religion of Jesus*

After this bloodshed with no remedy
 Caused by that sly vizier's sheer cruelty,
 Another king descending from that Jew
 Attempted to destroy the Christians too,
 If you desire to learn of this attack 745
 Recite, *By heaven and its zodiac!**
 The former king's bad precedent, by fate,
 This other king now tried to imitate;
 Those who established evil customs still
 Receive each hour a curse which makes them ill,
 While habits of the good don't fade away,
 From wicked men oppression's what will stay,
 Until the end of time this latter kind
 Towards their fellow tyrants are inclined.
 In parallel veins different waters passed 750
 And they'll continue till the trumpet blast,*

Sweet water reaches good men in the end,
What is it? *To the good the Book we send.**

When you express your need, that is a flame,
From prophethood's home straight to you it came,
Like flashes always circling round their source
They'd head back there if they could find the force;
Light from the window circles round within
Because the sun from star to star must spin.

If you're associated with a star, 755

You'll share your journey home, however far,
With Venus as ascendant, what delight!
You'll be disposed to love, and want what's right;
But if it's murderous Mars, then all will see
That what you seek is war and enmity;
Beyond them there's another universe

Where stars don't burn out, nor seem ominous,
In other heavens such stars circle round,

Not those that we can gaze at from the ground,
Bathed in the light of God, immaculate, 760

Not joined together, nor kept separate—

If for ascendant you have one of these

Your soul will burn each infidel you seize!

It's not the rage of Mars, so don't be fooled,

It doesn't change from mastery to being ruled,

This ruling light which God helps keep alight,

By shielding it with fingers curled up tight;

Over all souls God lets His radiance fall,

The lucky lift their skirts to catch it all,

Appreciating their small share of light 765

From all apart from God they blind their sight;

Whoever lacked a skirt acquired through love,

Could not catch any radiance from above:

Round Universal Being contingents turn

While roses make each nightingale's heart burn.

The ox has on the outside coloured skin,

Colours in humans are found deep within:

Bright colours from the vat of purity
 And ugly ones from brooks of cruelty:
*The colouring by God** is rated first,
 The filthiest is called *what God has cursed*;
 All flotsam on the sea must run its course
 But in the end it goes back to its source,
 Like rapid torrents in the peaks above
 And human souls returning through their love.

770

*The Jewish king makes a fire and places an idol next to it, saying
 'Whoever prostrates himself before this idol will escape the fire'*

Now witness what that Jew tried to conspire,
 He placed an idol right beside the fire,
 Saying, 'Bow down before this to be free
 Or else you'll burn in fire eternally!'
 Not dealing with his own self's vile abuse
 An idol form's what he let it produce;
 Such forms the mother of all idols makes:
 Your dragon-self produces countless snakes!
 Idols are sparks your flint-like self sends out,
 Water is what you need to put them out,
 But water can't defeat that stubborn stone
 So safety's what no selfish man has known.
 The idol is foul water in a bowl,
 Its source is nothing but the carnal soul;
 The idol is just like a filthy flood,
 The self produces it like its own blood;
 A stone can break a hundred cups and more,
 But nothing stops the fount's relentless pour:
 To break an idol is an easy task,
 To smash yourself is hard—you need to ask?
 To know the self's form, read what he dictates
 Concerning hellfire and hell's seven gates:
 Each moment there's a plot, dear travellers,
 Drowning more pharaohs with their followers*—
 To Moses and his God escape today,
 Don't spill faith's water—that's the pharaoh's way!

775

780

785

Cling to the Prophet and his God, take pride,
Your body's ignorant, cast it aside!

*A child begins to talk from inside the fire, urging people
to throw themselves into it*

This Jew then brought a woman with her child

Before the idol while the flames grew wild,
Then grabbed her child and quickly threw it in

So she, in fear, would swap her faith for sin:

He wanted her now to bow down her head,

But then her child cried, 'Stop, for *I'm not dead!*

I haven't died, I'm happy, join me here!

790

It only looks like fire, so have no fear!

The fire just blinds you to what's really there:

God's mercy which has come out of thin air.

Enter, and witness living proof of God,

The joy which makes His own élite applaud,

Come and see water that's like fire, it's true,

A world of fire which seems like water too!

And Abraham's well-hidden mysteries:*

Here he found jasmine and tall cypress trees.

When you gave birth to me I saw my tomb—

795

How much I feared I'd fall down from your womb!

Once born I fled the confines of that cage

To fresh air and a bigger, brighter stage.

But now that world seems like a womb to me

For in this fire I've found serenity:

I've seen a world without a trace of death,

All atoms here have Jesus's pure breath,*

A world that's dead in form, but lives in essence,

While that world lives in form, the realm of transience.

Enter, for every mother has the right,

800

You'll see it has no flames though it shines bright!

Enter, for all good fortune's found in here,

This opportunity will disappear!

You've seen the might of tyrants who are base,

Now come and see the power of God's grace!

His mercy is what makes me now implore,
 Since drowned in joy I think of you no more;
 Come in, and call the other people too,
 A royal banquet's waiting here for you!
 Come in believers! Our pure faith apart, 805
 All other things bring torment to the heart—
 Enter the flames like moths which burn their wings,
 Good fortune blossoms here like endless springs.
 The child's repeated shouting was so loud
 Amazement filled the souls of all the crowd,
 So, selflessly, each one of them in turn
 Jumped in believing that they wouldn't burn:
 They dived through love, they didn't drag their feet,
 All for the one who makes the bitter sweet.
 The king's assistants weren't long to arrive 810
 To stop them—they said, 'No one else must dive!'

That Jew turned red for he now felt ashamed,
 Regret had left his bitter heart inflamed
 Because he saw the people's faith increase—
 Through self-annihilation they'd found peace.
 Thank God this evil plot left him disgraced,
 For Satan even would have been red-faced,
 What he'd rubbed on the faces of that crowd
 Now covered his own face just like a cloud,
 That one who tore the shirts that we all wore, 815
 Saw his own ripped, ours perfect as before.

*How the smirk of that man who pronounced the name of
 Mohammad mockingly remained fixed on his face*

He smirked as he read out the Prophet's name,
 Then couldn't wipe it off, and so he came
 To beg Mohammad, 'Prophet, pardon me,
 You have such grace and know Truth's mystery;
 I made fun then because I was a fool,
 I should myself have met such ridicule.'
 When God decides to show they're immature
 He makes men feel inclined to mock the pure,

He also hides men's faults, preserves their name,

820

By stopping them from giving others blame;

When God should wish to help he first decrees

That we must humbly beg him on our knees—

How great it is to cry for just his sake

And for a heart, through love of him, to bake!

Your tears will end with laughter—can't you tell?

How blest are those who know this secret well:

Wherever water's flowed some grass has grown,

Wherever tears are wept God's mercy's shown—

Be like the water-wheel, weep endlessly

825

So that your soul can grow its greenery!

Have mercy first if tears are what you seek,

To gain God's mercy pity all the weak!

The fire's reproach for the king of the Jews

The king turned to the fire, 'Short-tempered one,

What's going on, are you not meant to burn?

What happened to your special quality?

Have your intentions changed by destiny?

Fire-worshippers you chose not to forgive

So why let those who don't adore you live?

You're not known for your patience, so why now

830

Will you not burn—have you forgotten how?

This world deprives us of our sense of sight,

But how can fire not burn—this can't be right!

Have spells been cast, or is it sorcery?

Is this unnatural outcome fate's decree?

The fire said, 'I've not changed, idolater,

Come in and feel my heat, you murderer!

My nature and my essence stay the same,

As God's own sword, I slash when he takes aim!

The Turkmen's dogs all linger by his hut,

835

Before each guest they fawn and whimper, but

If they should see a stranger pass one day,

They'll roar like lions, and chase him away—

I'm not less than a dog in servanthood
 And God controls more than the Turkmen could!

If the fire in your nature makes you grieve
 Remember that it's only by God's leave,
 If the fire in your nature gives you bliss
 The lord of faith has filled your soul with this.
 When you feel sorrow beg forgiveness, friend, 840
 He's sent grief as a means to a good end!
 Your pain he'll turn to joy, and equally,
 If he should choose, from fetters you'll be free.
 Earth, water, wind, and fire, his faithful slaves,
 Alive with him, to us seem dead as graves:
 In front of God, flames always stand up straight
 And writhe like lovers in a passionate state,
 A spark leaps out when iron's struck with stone,
 It travels out by God's command alone,
 Don't strike it with the stone of tyranny— 845
 It multiplies like men relentlessly;
 Though stone and iron are the cause, you can
 Attempt to look beyond them, noble man.
 This cause was prompted by a prior one,
 So how can men assume that it has none?
 Those causes which decide what Prophets do
 Are higher than these causes you can view,
 Those ones can choose to make these take effect,
 Or make them fruitless things we all neglect;
 These causes can be grasped with just your mind, 850
 But only Prophets know the other kind—
 What is it? Say, '*A rope*' in Arabic,
 Hung in the well so straight it seems a stick:
 The water-wheel's spin moves this rope in front,
 If you can't see this, then you're ignorant!
 Don't say rope-like effects seen in this world
 From heaven's wheel directly have been hurled,
 Don't be a zero, round just like this wheel,
 Hollow wood for the fire—discern what's real!

The wind can clash with fire by God's decree, 855
Drunk through God's wine which adds ferocity:
Water is gentle, fire enraged, my son,
Open your eyes, see both come from the One.
If the wind's soul had not been taught by God
How could it tell apart the men of Aad?
Hud drew a line around his righteous men,
On reaching it the wind died down again,
But all those standing on the other side
Were flattened for wind there did not subside;
Just like Shayban the Shepherd* who would draw 860
Around his flock a line all clearly saw,
So when he left on Fridays for the prayer
No wolf would ever harm the sheep in there,
While wolves dared not ignore the shepherd's sign
No sheep would ever step across this line:
The grunts of greed from both the wolves and sheep
Were silenced by the circle of his keep.
For mystics too the wind that signals death,
Like Joseph's scent, seems soft, refreshing breath,
And Abraham from fire felt no alarm*— 865
God's chosen prophet bonfires couldn't harm!
The faithful can't be burnt by fires of lust
Though it reduces men to less than dust.
On God's command, the fierce waves in the sea
Could still tell Moses from his enemy,
When orders came the earth dragged Korah* down
Into its depths, despite his throne and crown;
Jesus's breath made water mixed with clay*
Grow wings, become a bird and fly away!
Your praise is now hot air, but will appear 870
A bird of heaven if your heart's sincere;
Moses's light made Sinai dance and spin,*
Becoming thus a dervish, free of sin:
Mountains can change to dervishes each day,
Moses's body used to be mere clay!

*The Jewish king ridicules, denies, and refuses to accept
the advice of his own élite*

The king saw all these wonders, but did naught
 But mock and then deny what they all taught,
 Advisers warned, 'Don't push the limit, king,
 Don't ride too far your steed of quarrelling!' 875
 He cuffed and locked them up immediately
 And then continued with his tyranny;
 At this point all the people heard a shout:
 'Stop, dog, our wrath has come to sort you out!'
 A fire soared forty feet above, and then
 It formed a ring and burnt all of his men:
 Their origin was fire right from the start—
 Back to their source they now had to depart.
 That group were also born of fire, of course;
 Particles track their universal source,
 A fire to burn believers with foul deeds, 880
 This fire consumed itself like burning weeds!

*His mother's called Hawiya, which means 'hell',**
 So she must be his everlasting cell:
 A mother seeks her child each day she lives
 As sources seek their own derivatives;
 If water is confined inside a pond,
 The wind extracts and carries it beyond,
 Then sets it free by wafting drops back home
 Gently, without creating waves or foam.
 Likewise, it's breath which steals men's souls away 885
 From this world's prison, bit by bit each day:
 For thus, *From us sweet perfumed words shall rise**
To places known alone by God, the Wise;
Our breaths are granted leave selectively,
Gifts for the realm of His eternity,
Rewards for good speech come down to us then
Twice over, mercy from God to good men.

Then He entrusts us to exemplars, so

His servants can receive what such men know—

These breaths ascend and grace comes down from there, 890

May you not cease from doing your own share!

Let's speak in Persian: this attraction's pull

Is from the source of all things spiritual;

The eyes of every group look to that side

Where inner cravings might be satisfied,

For each one seeks another of its kind—

The part pines for the whole you'll always find;

But maybe it can join another sort,

Becoming one of them when they consort?

Water and bread with us you can't compare 895

But, once they're eaten, turn to flesh in there,

Water and bread don't look compatible,

The end-result shows that it's possible.

So if it's something different that you like

It must at least in some way be alike;

Things that are similar only can be lent,

A loan is never something permanent:

A hunter's whistle sounds just like a bird

To capture those deceived by what they've heard!

Sea vapour can mislead all men who thirst, 900

For water they mistake its form at first;

The penniless are pleased to find false gold,

But in the mint its shameful truth is told.

Don't let false gold divert you straight to hell

Or fickle fancies lead you down a well,

Look up this tale in *Kalila and Dimna**

And find the page to which this part is similar:

*Explanation of trust in God: the lion's prey tell it
to stop self-exertion*

Once in a valley all the beasts ran scared:

A lion preyed on them and none were spared.

It used to hide, then pounce and seize its prey— 905
 That's why they couldn't face another day;
 Once, with the lion they agreed a deal:
 'Each day we'll satisfy you with a meal,
 But you must not attack us any more!
 This means our grass won't taste bad like before.'

The lion answers its prey and explains the benefit of exerting oneself

The lion said, 'Alright, if you're sincere,
 But I know every trick, let that be clear!
 Men's schemes have ruined me, I've made mistakes,
 Been bitten by men's scorpions and their snakes.'
 One's carnal soul that's hidden from our sight 910
 Is worse than them in scheming and in spite,
 'Believers are not stung,' when I first heard
 I followed with my heart the Prophet's word.

The lion's prey prefer full trust in fate to exerting oneself

The beasts of prey said, 'Sage who clearly sees,
 Precautions can't *prevent what God decrees*,
 To play safe just means extra bother too—
 Have trust in destiny, that's best for you!
 Don't wave your fist at fate and shake your head
 In case fate picks a fight with you instead!
 With God's decree be dead just like a pawn, 915
 Protected from *the Lord of every dawn*.*'

The lion prefers exertion of effort to trust in fate

The lion said, 'If trust will guide, okay,
 But effort also is the Prophet's way:
 For once Mohammad firmly clarified:
 "Trust God, but still make sure your camel's tied!"
God loves the one who earns, so I urge you:
 Trust God but don't forget you must act too!

The lion's prey prefer trust in God over exerting oneself

They said, 'But trying to earn means you're weak,
Birds say such bites fill no more than one's beak,
And earning can't surpass full trust in fate, 920
Complete surrender to the Lord's dictate.'
Many fled problems, but found more despair:
Don't run from snakes straight to a dragon's lair!
A man's scheme backfired with his first real shot,
It seemed the food of life, but made him rot,
He locked the door, but with his foe inside!
Such was the plot that Pharaoh once had tried:
A hundred thousand babies he had slain,
But let the one sought in his home remain!
Our vision has such flaws, to end your plight 925
Annihilate your vision in God's sight:
His sight for ours—what a terrific swap!
With His sight your fulfilment will not stop;
Until a child has learned to walk he must
Ride father's shoulders, placing there his trust,
If he impatiently sets off alone
He'll end up wretched, bruised, and on his own;
Men's souls, without a hand or foot, could be
Seen flying through the realms of purity,
But when God told them, '*Go down** in your cage!' 930
They were entrapped again by lust and rage.
We're children of the Lord who want love's milk,
Men are God's family, though not of His ilk,
If He can drop the rain down on your head
Through mercy He can also bring you bread!

The lion prefers exerting oneself over trust

The lion said, 'But God has caused to rise
A ladder right before our very eyes;
We must climb rung by rung up to the top—
It's selfish to resign to fate and stop:

When you have feet, why make out that you're lame? 935
When you've a pair of hands why do the same?'
If a king puts a spade in his slave's hand
Without a word he's given his command:
Think of your hands the same as that slave's spade—
Mere thought of action means his judgement's made:
Act on His signs with heart, and be sincere,
And then their truths before you shall appear;
He'll give you hints of secrets that he masks,
Lift off your burden, give you other tasks—
If you consent, then you'll be carried through, 940
If you accept, you'll be accepted too,
Become His spokesman—follow His command:
The union that you seek you'll reach as planned.
Exertion's thanking God for strength to act
While fatalism spurns it—that's a fact!
Through giving thanks our means to act increase,
Through fatalism grace from Him will cease:
Don't doze while travelling, for if you should sleep
You'll miss His gate and court, and then you'll weep!
Don't sleep, you lazy brat, so heedlessly, 945
Except beneath His own fruit-laden tree,
So when the wind should make the branches sway
Some fruit will fall to help you on your way!
Sleeping near highwaymen so trustfully
How can you ever feel security?
Don't turn your nose up at His signals, brat,
Spoilt women who believe they're men do that!
The little sense you have will not remain:
A head is just a tail without a brain!
For such ingratitude is mean and low 950
And leads you to the fiery depths below—
Trust God, but also act and not just wait:
First sow your seeds before you count on fate!

The lion's prey say again that trust is better than exertion

The animals made a hullabaloo:

‘The greedy who have “sown” their deeds like you,
A thousand men and women who have tried,
From fortune then why were they all denied?’

For countless centuries from creation's start,

Like dragons who have spread their jaws apart

These clever people planned such schemes at will 955

Which lift up mountains from their base, but still

God has described their schemes as disapproved:

He's warned: *the tops of mountains might be moved.**

Apart from that which had been pre-ordained

From all their scheming nothing has remained,

They fell from grace and lost the power to act

While God's decrees have all remained intact—

Don't think that earning's more than just a name,

Or that exertion's more than just a game!

*How Azrael once stared at a man who then fled to Solomon's
palace; the demonstration of the superiority of trust over exertion,
the latter being of relatively little value*

A noble man once barged in through the crowd 960

In Solomon's famed court, and cried aloud;

His face was white with fear, his lips were blue.

Solomon asked, ‘Friend, what is wrong with you?’

‘It's Azrael—he gave me such a stare

That showed more rage than any man could bear!’

Solomon said, ‘Whatever you want, just ask!’

He pleaded, ‘Please assign the wind this task:

To transfer me to India with its breath

So, over there, I might escape my death.’

People will run away from deprivation 965

To be devoured by greed and expectation;

His fright was like the fear of feeling need,

His flight to India represents his greed.

Solomon told the wind to make this trip,
 To take this man to India's southern tip.
 The next day at exactly the same time
 He questioned Azrael right at the chime:
 'Angel of death, did you drive that good man
 From home and family—was that your plan?'
 He answered, 'Now you know I wouldn't lie,
 I just looked on amazed as he strolled by,
 For God had said today he would be dead
 Not over here, but India's tip instead—
 Even with wings to take him through the air
 I thought he was too far to die down there!
 All of the world's affairs are planned this way,
 Open your eyes to see this clear as day!
 Whom shall we leave? Ourselves? Impossible!
 To flee from God? That's simply laughable!

970

*The lion again claims exertion to be superior to trust,
 and explains the advantages of exertion*

The lion said, 'That's true, but don't forget
 The works of prophets and believers yet.'
 All their exertions God himself made good,
 Like all the trials and torture they withstood,
 Their plans succeeded—take that as a sign!
What issues from a fine man must be fine.
 Heavenly birds they captured with their traps
 New virtues made of their own handicaps—
 So strive your utmost on the mystic way
 Just like the prophets and the saints, don't stray!
 For striving hard does not mean fighting fate
 Since fate itself has served this on our plate—
 Call me an infidel if men lose out
 By trying to be faithful and devout!
 Your head's not broken—treatment's not required,
 Just strive a bit, then rest like those retired!
 Those after this world seek a rotten place
 But seeking what's beyond is no disgrace;

975

980

All schemes to gain wealth here fail miserably
But schemes to flee this world taste victory,
So dig a tunnel to escape your cell, 985
Don't block it up, or you'll be stuck in hell:
This world's a prison, we're locked up inside,
To free yourself dig all the way outside!
What is this world? Being heedless of the Lord,
Not women and those precious goods you hoard!
But wealth you hold for your religion's health
Is good: the Prophet called it '*righteous wealth*.'
Water that's poured inside will sink the boat
While water underneath keeps it afloat.
Driving wealth from his heart to keep it pure 990
King Solomon preferred the title 'Poor':
That sealed jar in the stormy sea out there
Floats on the waves because it's full of air,
When you've the air of dervishhood inside
You'll float above the world, and there abide;
Although the world is this man's property
To his heart's eye it's worthless vanity—
So seal your heart's mouth shut like Solomon
And fill it with divine breath from the One!
Like pain and cure, exertion's being's true, 995
Denial of this is mere exertion too.

The establishment of the superiority of exertion over trust

So many proofs the lion would relate,
The fatalists grew tired of this debate;
The fox, the deer, the hare, the jackal too
Stopped answering back, abandoning their view;
With him they then agreed a deal, where he
Would not lose out—they gave a guarantee:
Each day a beast would come straight to his den
Without the need for him to hunt again:
Whoever drew the shortest of the straws 1000
Would race just like a cheetah to his jaws!

But when the hare's turn came he screamed a lot:
 'How long must tyrants take all that we've got!'

The other animals blame the hare for his delay in going to the lion

They told him, 'Many times we've sacrificed
 Our lives to keep our pledge, and that's sufficed.
 You stubborn hare, don't shame us any more,
 Now hurry up before he starts to roar!'

The hare answers them

The hare said, 'Friends, won't you give me respite,
 My scheme will save you from your sorry plight,
 Life then will be secure for all of you,
 The same applies for all your children too:
 Each prophet called on his community
 In the same way to seek security,
 A route beyond each could identify
 As narrow as the pupil of an eye—
 Their people thought them, like the pupil, small,
 But who could boast their greatness—none at all!'

1005

The other animals object to the words of the hare

'Don't be a donkey's hair, now listen well,
 Act like the hare you are, so all can tell!
 You're bragging to your betters, don't ignore
 The fact we might have thought of this before;
 Either you're arrogant, or it's our fate,
 How can your speech fit someone in your state?'

1010

The hare's answer to the other animals

He said, 'My friends, by God I've been inspired,
 A weakling's learned strong views, that's what's transpired.'
 God taught the bee a skill that's something more
 Than what he taught the lion and the boar:

The bee can make a moist, sweet honeycomb,
God's opened up to it His wisdom's home,
Like when He taught the silkworm how to spin, 1015
An earthworm wouldn't know where to begin!
And Adam learned such truths from God that fire
Blazed up to heaven as a massive pyre,
But the good name of angels was wiped out
By that blind one, who God's own word would doubt: *
Satan, ascetic for millennia, then
Was muzzled and would not be freed again,
So he could not drink wisdom's milk at all,
Nor walk around God's heavenly castle's hall.
Physical senses are like muzzles too 1020
That keep the milk of mystic truth from you;
A jewel has dropped in your heart's deep core,
Which neither seas nor heaven knew before,
So why still worship form, an empty shape—
Your soulless spirit must learn to escape!
If humans could be men through form and name
The Prophet and Bu Jahl would be the same:
Paintings can look like men, but still we doubt
When we look closely—something's been left out:
Its form is perfect, but it lacks a soul— 1025
Go, seek out that rare jewel—that's your goal!
The lions bowed their heads at what God gave
The dog of the Companions of the Cave: *
Despite its ugly form it reached the height
Of animal perfection through God's light.
The author's pen will not record your looks—
'Learnèd' and 'just' instead they write in books:
Such qualities are spiritual and real,
Not things you can locate, observe, and feel;
Rays strike your frame from God's unknown domain, 1030
The Lord's divine sun heaven can't contain.

*An account of the hare's knowledge and an explanation of
the virtue and benefits of knowledge*

This discourse has no end—let's leave it there
 And listen to the story of the hare,
 Sell those dumb ears and buy some better ones
 For donkey's ears are just for simpletons!*
 Witness the hare outfox the lion with tricks,
 Come, learn about the plot he tried to fix!
 In Solomon's realm knowledge was the goal,
 This world's material, knowledge for the soul,
 Knowledge is what makes Man magnificent 1035
 While other creatures are all impotent:
 Lions and leopards turn to mice through fear
 And crocodiles turn pale when he comes near,
 Angels and demons run out to the shores,
 All seek a hiding-place or bolt their doors;
 So Man has very many hidden foes,
 A cautious man is one with sense, who knows:
 All kinds of creatures hidden from our sight
 Attempt to strike your heart with all their might.
 If you should ever wash down by the stream 1040
 A thorn inside is bound to make you scream,
 Although it's hidden down below, beware!
 Once you are pricked you'll know for sure it's there!
 Some thorns inspire, some tempt you from your course,
 They come from thousands, not a single source,
 Wait till your outward senses have evolved
 To see them all, and find your problems solved—
 You'll see then just whom you have failed to heed
 And whom you've judged as qualified to lead.

The other animals seek from the hare the secret of his thoughts

The other beasts then said, 'Quick-thinking hare,
 What is it you perceive of our affair? 1045

You've dealt with king-size problems, so relate
What you conclude about our present state!
Conferral aids perception, helps one learn,
Like minds can help their fellows to discern:
The Prophet said, '*Consult them, counsellor,*
And trust the ones with whom you must confer!'

The hare withholds that secret from them

The hare said, 'Every secret can't be shown,
Dice bring up odds then evens when they're thrown:
To clean a mirror first you'll want to blow 1050
But steam will quickly dull the mirror's glow.'
Keep your lips sealed, don't mention, as a rule,
Your path, your wealth, and your religious school,
For these three can attract so many foes,
Each one will wait to catch you once he knows—
Don't even tell a few, have you not read:
'*All secrets shared by more than two are spread?*'
Tie up two birds together and you'll see
That they stay grounded, trapped, in agony,
They're actually conferring, though they're bound, 1055
With metaphors to fool all those around.
The Prophet gave exclusive teachings too,
Answering his men though they then had no clue;
To cloak his words he'd use a parable
So foes could not grasp what was valuable,
And he extracted answers from each foe
While from his questions none of them would know!

The story of the hare's plot

The hare delayed his journey for a while,
Then started to complete that final mile,
That lion slew foes, and the hare was late, 1060
So he would beat the ground and roar, irate:
'I knew those wretched beasts were bound to break
Their promises—their contract was a fake!

They've tripped me up so cruelly with deceit,
 How many times will fate's tricks thus repeat!
 All feeble-minded princes feel despair
 When they can't see what's happening out there:
 The road looks smooth, but traps are set below,
 When they lack meaning, names are just for show,
 Both words and names are hidden pitfalls too: 1065
 Flattery is sand which saps all life from you.
 The sand which gushes water is so rare,
 You'll have to search for that kind everywhere!
 The man of God is like that type of sand;
 Fleeing himself he grabs God's helping hand,
 Faith's waters flow from him relentlessly,
 Reviving seekers with love's gifts for free.
 But other men are like the driest sand,
 They sap all life from you, please understand:
 Seek wisdom from the sage now, if you can, 1070
 Gain knowledge and new vision from this man!
 Seek wisdom, and then you'll become its source,
 Needless, safe from what drives men from their course;
 The student's tablet turns to one 'preserved',*
 When intellect from spirit grace is served:
 At first his intellect would lead the way
 But like a student now it must obey,
 The intellect repeats what Gabriel said:
 'Prophet, I'll burn if I should move ahead!
 But you can still proceed towards the goal, 1075
 I've reached my limit, Sultan of the Soul!''*

Each heedless and impatient, low ingrate
 Complains that he must always follow fate,
 Excuses like from those who feign being ill—
 They'll suffer from a sickness that can kill:
 'Saying you're sick in jest', the Prophet said
 'Will bring an illness that will leave you dead!'
 Fate ties up broken bones to heal the pain
 And joins together every broken vein:

You haven't any broken bones—we know! 1080
So who're you fooling with your bandaged toe?
One suffered so much striving on this course
And so Boraq was sent down as his horse;
He was now borne, for faith's demands he'd faced,
He followed orders first, then was embraced,
Before he'd have to meet the king's demands
But now the army follows his commands,
Stars also used to influence him then
But now he rules the stars just like his men,
If you have problems in perceiving it 1085
You'll also doubt the fact *the moon was split*,*
Revive your faith, but not just with your tongue,
Secretly to your lusts why have you clung?
When lusts are fresh, faith can't be any more,
Lust is the very key that locks the door!
Now you are judging God's inviolate word—
Examine your own soul, not truths you've heard!
Since you read through desire the Holy Verse
You make its meaning wretched and perverse!

On the shallow interpretation of the fly

A fly in donkey's urine, perched on straw, 1090
Just like a boatman gazing at the shore,
Said, 'Straw and urine are my boat and sea,
I've contemplated this fact recently:
I'm in the sea, the captain of my boat,
Following maps and methods learned by rote.'
In urine it would steer its straw-made raft
As if in boundless seas, for it was daft:
It thought a single drop could stretch so far
Unable to observe things as they are,
Its world stretched out as far it could view, 1095
Small eyes count as a sea a drop or two!
Narrow interpreters are like this fly,
With straw and urine they all falsify,

If you stop reading from your own small view,
 The phoenix will grant kingdoms then to you!
 Still, those who've worked this out aren't really flies,
 Spirits don't correspond to body-size:

The lion roars loudly because the hare arrives late

Like that brave hare the lion had thought tame
 Whose soul was not restricted by his frame.
 The lion roared, 'Through my own ears my foes 1100
 Have blinded me: they've dealt such vicious blows!
 I've been bound by those fatalists' vile plots,
 With wooden weapons too they've taken shots!
 No longer will I listen to their word,
 They're screams that from the ghouls too can be heard!
 Just tear them up, O heart, don't be led on,
 And skin them for they've nothing once that's gone!
 What's skin? The specious words which lead astray!
 Like ripples on the tide they fade away.
 The meaning's flesh, while speech is just the shell— 1105
 Like form in contrast to the soul as well.
 The rotten kernels can't be seen through skin,
 Nor good ones, for skin hides its pride within.
 When water is the pad and wind the pen
 The words you write will soon be gone again,
 They're etched on waves; if you seek constancy
 You'll be dissatisfied by what you see!
 Renounce lust's breath, which fills you to the brim,
 And wind will bring you messages from Him.
 God's messages are always sweet and pure 1110
 Because throughout they always will endure:
 All rulers' glories and their sermon-praise*
 Must pass, but not the prophets' perfect ways,
 While pomp of kings comes from their own desire
 By God the prophets are admitted higher,

The names of kings are scraped off coins in days
But Ahmad's name no coiner can erase!
His name contains the whole prophetic line
The way that ten includes one through to nine.

Further explanation of the hare's stratagem

His journey to the lion he delayed 1115
In order to rehearse the plan he'd made;
After a while the hare then headed near
To whisper something in the lion's ear.
What worlds the strength of gnosis lets you see,
More vast than oceans filled with purity!
Our forms traverse this lovely ocean fast
Like cups which on its surface have been cast;
Until they're full like tubs they float on top
But once they're filled they finally start to drop,
Truth's sea is hidden, land is on display, 1120
Our forms are waves, or just the ocean spray.
Whatever means form uses to come near
By that same means waves toss it far from here,
Until the Giver of the Truths they know,
Until the arrows learn who's fired the bow.
The foolish think their horses have no worth
And force them to race all across the earth:
Each places little value on his horse
Though rapidly it bears him on the course,
Such that a foolish, simple-minded twit 1125
Will even ask, 'Has anyone seen it—
Who stole my horse and where is he now hiding?'
'Dear fellow, what is that on which you're riding!'
'This is a horse, I know, but where's that one?'
'Wake up famed knight, your brain has been undone!'
The soul seems lost although it's so close by:
Your bladder's full although your lips are dry.

How can you see bright colours with your sight
 When you've not even learned to see the light?
 With colours you completely lost your mind, 1130
 Their glare became the veil which made you blind.
 Did you not see when colours fade at night
 That they are all dependent on the light?
 Without light, colour disappears from view,
 The same applies for inner colours too,
 While outward light the sun and stars may shine
 The source of inner light is the Divine:
 Vision's light comes from light inside your heart,
 This inner light's required for it to start.
 Your heart's light's source is naught but God's own light 1135
 Safe from the reach of sense and reason's blight.
 No colours can be seen at night unlit,
 For light, the darkness is the opposite:
 You must see light to see the colours too,
 The opposite of light has proved it's true,
 As God created hardship and distress
 So through them you would learn of happiness:
 All hidden things by opposites are known,
 Since He has none, God's hidden on His own.
 Man can discern all colours once there's light, 1140
 Each as distinct as black skin next to white:
 You know of light thanks to its opposite,
 Things show their opposite through lack of it.
 No opposite for God's light can exist
 Through which it might be known—this is the gist,
Our eyes can't see Him, even with our pleas,
 Moses's mountain proves to us *He sees*;^{*}
 Like lions from thought's jungle, forms have come,
 In this way, thought's where speech and sound come from;
 Though speech and sound have thus emerged from thought 1145
 You have no clue where that sea should be sought,
 But since you've seen the wave of speech is fine
 You know its source, that sea, must be divine.
 From knowledge when there first arose thought's wave
 Through His speech then a form to you it gave:

This form was born of speech, then died again,
The waves drew back like cattle to their pen.
From formlessness comes form originally,
And *We return to Him** continually!
Each moment you must die and then return, 1150
‘The world is but a moment’, you’ll soon learn;
Our thought’s an arrow He’s shot from the sky,
Can it rise up again to Him on high?
Each breath the world’s renewed, though we can’t tell,
While it’s renewed, the world persists as well:
Life’s constantly renewed just like the stream,
A single mass in form though it might seem,
Its swift flow makes it seem continuous
Like sparklers twirling round—it’s marvellous!
For if you spin a lit torch round and round 1155
Its flame looks like a circle that is sound;
A stretch of time appears thus through sheer pace—
Speed in creation covers time like space,
But scholars can’t perceive beyond the looks—
Even Hosam, who’s read the loftiest books.

The hare reaches the lion

The lion in a rage first lost his patience,
Then saw the hare approaching in the distance,
Running, bold, unafraid, self-confident,
Angry, outraged and fierce in temperament—
Meekness would be in vain, the hare’d worked out, 1160
While bravery wouldn’t make the lion doubt.
The hare came nearer to the lion’s den
And heard it roar, ‘Here comes that wretch again!
I’ve torn apart the limbs of elephants
And boxed the ears of lions during hunts—
Who does this half-wit hare think that he’s found
To wrestle with and pin down on the ground?
Continue with your heedless sleep no more,
Listen, you ass-eared beast,* to my deep roar!’

The hare's apology

The hare cried, 'Please hear my apology, 1165
 I pray that your forgiveness pardons me!
 'What kind of explanation do you bring
 As you approach the presence of the king?
 For such bad timing we'll chop off your head,
 No cheap excuses do we let be said.'
 A lame excuse is worse than the misdeed,
 It ruins all you might have earned, take heed!
 'Hare, your excuse is bound to be absurd,
 I don't have donkeys' ears to hear a word!
 'This worthless wretch, king, count as someone true 1170
 For tyranny's what held me back from you,
 My noble lord, show mercy please today—
 Don't drive from here a slave who lost his way!
 That ocean which fills up each river-bed
 Bears all the flotsam happily on its head:
 By being kind seas don't end up with less,
 They don't decrease in spite of their largesse.'
 He said, 'I'm generous when the time is right,
 I tailor cloth to fit each person's height.'
 The hare said, 'If I don't deserve your grace 1175
 Before your snake-like wrath I'll turn my face:
 Since breakfast I've been on my way to you,
 A fellow traveller made the journey too—
 The other beasts sent out another hare
 To come with me, it's safer as a pair—
 But then a lion stopped us in our tracks:
 It pounced on us and gave us heart attacks!
 "We are the slaves of a great king," I warned,
 "At court our disappearance would be mourned."
 He said, "Which king makes you now feel no shame 1180
 Before me to recall another's name?
 You and your king I'll tear apart like clay
 If you two hares should try to run away!"

I pleaded, "Let me see my king again
To tell him where we've been—I'll come back then!"
He said, "But leave your friend as guarantee,
Or you will be the sacrifice for me!"
Although we begged him, we could not succeed,
My friend was tied up, so that I'd be freed;
My captive friend was twice as fat as me
And twice as fine in grace and dignity.
That lion's blocked the road since this event,
This is what happened after I was sent.
Abandon hope of more allowances,
The truth tastes bitter, but that's how it is:
If you need daily meals unblock the way—
Come and drive off that shameless wretch today!"

1185

The lion answers the hare and sets off with him

The lion said, 'By God, we must rush there
If what you say is true, then show me where
So I can deal the likes of him their due,
But if you're lying I'll deal it to you!'
The hare led like a guide who has a map,
Taking the lion straight into his trap,
Towards a well which previously the hare
Had cleverly converted to a snare.
The pair soon reached the well they'd headed for,
The hare's effect like water under straw:*
Water transports a blade from place to place,
But can it move a mountain from its base?
His guile's trap was the lion's noose, my friend,
The clever hare made tyranny thus end,
As Moses killed the Pharaoh through the Nile
With his huge army and the rank and file,
Just like the gnat with half a wing which split
The skull of Nimrod,* disregarding it;
Watch those who listened to their enemies,
Hear what befell those plagued by jealousies,

1190

1195

For Pharaoh heeded what Haman conveyed,*
 As Nimrod heard the devil and obeyed—
 If foes should chat with you just like a mate 1200
 Look for the trap that comes with every bait!
 For sugar he gives poison, so beware,
 He treats you cruelly, though he seems to care.
 When destiny strikes, you just see the ends
 And not the means, nor enemies from friends,
 Since you're like this, confess to God your shame,
 Begin to mourn and fast, and praise His name!
 'Knower of hidden things', plead all the while,
 'Don't crush us with the rock of evil guile!'
 The lion's maker, though we're a disgrace 1205
 Don't let it jump out from its hiding-place!
 Don't make fire and sweet water look the same,
 Nor change to water's form a burning flame!
 Your wrath's wine can intoxicate each brain,
 Let non-existents thus existence gain!
 What's drunkenness? To keep your eyes shut tight
 So stones appear like jewels in your sight,
 It's changing every sense round for the good
 So tamarisk should smell like sandalwood.

*The story of the Hoopoe and Solomon, explaining that
when destiny is fulfilled open eyes are shut*

Solomon's tent was put up by his men 1210
 And all his birds came back to him again,
 He spoke their tongue and knew them personally
 So one by one they flew there eagerly.
 The birds stopped twittering inside his tent,
Than brothers they became more eloquent:
 Sharing a language is a bond so deep,
 With foreigners we're prisoners in their keep,
 Some Turks and Indians though might speak the same
 While fellow Turks are strangers but in name—
 The tongue of intimacy is set apart, 1215
 Beyond mere words, it's being one at heart;

By verbal and non-verbal intimations
Our hearts give thousands of interpretations.
The birds talked of their secrets as plain facts
About their skills, their knowledge, and their acts:
They shared them, one by one, with Solomon,
To gain his gifts they talked up what they'd done!
Not out of self-assertion or sheer pride
But so he'd let them sit with him inside:
To gain his freedom back once he is caught 1220
The prisoner shows his skills till he is bought,
But if the buyer sickens him with shame
He'll claim he's ill, unstable, deaf, and lame!
The hoopoe first explained his worthiness
By speaking of his skills and thoughtfulness:
'Although this talent seems inferior
To speak concisely is superior.'
Solomon said, 'By all means, go ahead!'
'When from the zenith I look down,' she said,
'I see with accuracy, like my own hand, 1225
The water lying deep beneath the land:
Its depth, its colour, where to dig a well,
The nature of its source too I can tell—
If on a camping-place you must decide
Keep this perceptive hoopoe by your side!'
Solomon said, 'We do need such a brain
In vast and empty, waterless terrain,
To lead the men to water in the ground—
So take the job of serving water round!'

The crow's attack on the claim of the hoopoe

On hearing this, the crow rose jealously 1230
To claim the hoopoe spoke dishonestly:
'It's rude to speak to kings in such false ways,
More so to lie absurdly in self-praise:
If she could see that from beyond the sky
How come that snare had still escaped her eye

In which she was entrapped so easily?
 How come she stepped inside unwittingly?'
 Solomon asked, 'Well, hoopoe is this true,
 Are dregs in the first glass I'm served by you?
 You've drunk mere yoghurt, don't claim that you're high! 1235
 The boasts you made before me were a lie!'

The hoopoe answers the criticism of the crow

She said, 'Though I'm a beggar, poor and bare,
 Don't listen to the things my foes declare,
 If you consider false the words I've said
 Here is my neck—feel free to chop my head!
 The crow who would deny that God's will rules
 Rejects faith, though she's studied in great schools:
 If you don't have an ounce of faithfulness
 You're like the crotch of lust and filthiness!
 I see all snares, while flying in the skies 1240
 If fate does not deny them to my eyes:
 When fate decrees our brain sleeps in its spell,
 The sun's eclipsed, the moon turns black as well;
 It's not so strange that fate should thus decree,
 Fate too wills your denial of destiny.'

The story of Adam: destiny blinded his sight, so that he failed to observe the message, and to refrain from interpreting it differently

*He taught the Names** to Adam at the start,
 Thus knowledge filled our ancestor's pure heart,
 The names of things, which showed how they'd turn out
 Were granted to his soul to rid all doubt;
 Each name that he'd assign would therefore last, 1245
 What he called 'slow' did not then turn out fast,
 The faithful at the end of time he knew
 And those who'd turn out unbelievers too—
 So learn the names of things as He decrees,
He taught the Names holds all the mysteries.

Our names for things convey the way they're seen,
Their inner natures are what God's names mean,
For Moses simply called his stick 'a rod',*
While 'snake' was what had been assigned by God;
'Omar' meant polytheist once in the past, 1250
Although it meant 'believer' at Alast;*
Our names are like a seed that's just been sown,
Before God is the fruit that's finally grown;
In non-existence seeds are just a form,
Existent with the Lord, they must transform,
And in the end our names from God dictate
How we will truly be and what's our fate:
He names men thus according to their end
While for their present state a name He'll lend.
When Adam gained the light of purity 1255
He then perceived souls and reality,
God's light in him when angels could observe
They fell prostrate and vowed that they would serve!
If I recount the virtues of this sun
The end of time will come before I'm done,
But though he was so wise, when fate decreed
One prohibition Adam failed to heed:
'Is this to be forbidden? That seems odd!
Or is interpreting allowed by God?'
Since he tried to interpret on his own 1260
He couldn't leave forbidden fruit alone,
Like when a gardener stepped upon a thorn:
A thief snatched all his things and then was gone,
The gardener soon calmed down and found relief,
But saw his tools were stolen by the thief.
'O Lord, we've erred!'
'We lost the way as soon as darkness came!'
So destiny can block the sun's bright light,
Turn lions into mice because of fright.

If I don't see a snare by God's decree 1265
I'm not the first who can't see destiny;

Blest is the one who follows righteousness,
 Who gives up all his power for lowliness:
 If fate should dress you up in black like night
 Still it will help you in your hardest plight;
 If destiny should try to murder you
 First it makes sure that you'll be born anew;
 If it waylays you, hurls you in a ditch,
 A tent for you in heaven it will pitch:
 By frightening you, know that He's being kind, 1270
 In His safe kingdom space for you He'll find,
 This talk remains unfinished, but it's late,
 Now listen to the tale while I narrate:

The hare steps back from the lion when it approaches the well

The lion now approached the well they'd found
 But saw the hare retreat and turn around:
 'Why is it you retreat, hare? what is wrong?
 Don't stop like that, come forward and be strong!'

The hare screamed, 'Oh, my feet have fled from me!
 My soul now trembles and desires to flee!
 Can you not see my face has turned so pale? 1275
 About my inner state it tells the tale.'
 Since God has called the face 'a tell-tale clue'
 On this the mystic focuses his view,
 Colour and scent like bells make you aware,
 The horse's neigh informs you that it's there:
 The sound of each thing thus gives it away,
 A door's creak differs from a donkey's bray;
 The Prophet said, in judging people's souls,
 'A man stays hidden till his tongue unrolls.'
 Complexion also shows what's in your heart— 1280
 Have mercy on me, plant love that won't part!
 A bright complexion is your thanks' applause,
 A sickly one denies love and withdraws.

I've faced the one who pulls limbs out of place
And saps all trace of life out of your face,
The one who breaks all things He goes inside,
Uprooting ancient trees, however wide,
That one who traps you, then declares it's mate,
Man, beasts, and plants must follow His dictate;
Though these are small things, big things fall as well, 1285
Becoming pale, filled with a rotten smell.
The world now holds back, then shows thankfulness:
The blooming orchard once knew nakedness;
The sun which rises up with flames of fire
Then sinks head-first when it can't go up higher;
The stars shine while the lofty heavens turn
Each single moment they are caused to burn;
The beauty of the moon is cherished most,
But when it's sick it looks more like a ghost;
The earth, as if through manners, keeps so still, 1290
But tremors make it shake as if it's ill;
So many mountains through sheer agony
Were crushed to piles of dust so easily;
The air which was the soul's associate,
Turned stale and sick when fate commanded it;
Water, the spirit's kin, was sweet to taste,
But turned so bitter, left in pools of waste;
The fire puffed up with pride its flaming head,
But soon the wind pronounced that '*it is dead*'.
From turbulence that strikes the ocean tide 1295
You can detect the torment that's inside;
The wheel of heaven in its search rotates
And thus acquires its children's changing states:
First low, next in the middle, then up high,
Armies of bright stars decorate the sky.
Of elements like these you all consist,
To try to know their state you must persist,
Since all of these are filled with pain and grief
Of course you're pale and thinner than a leaf,
Because of all these opposites in you 1300
Like earth and fire, the wind and water too.

That sheep should flee the wolf should not seem strange
 But when with wolves kind greetings they exchange,
 Living is reconciling opposites

While death is when war starts because of splits;
 Wild-ass and lion feel close through God's grace

Although each seems a very different case,
 The world is trapped and suffers otherwise,
 That it must die should come as no surprise.

The hare recited wisdom of this kind:

1305

'It was because of this I lagged behind.'

The lion asks why the hare has stepped back

The lion asked, 'What makes you sick? Tell me
 The primary reason that you want to flee.'

The hare replied, 'The other lion's there,
 Out of harm's way in this well-hidden lair.'

The well's where every wise man wants his seat:

To purify their hearts they choose retreat;
 It's better than the darkness that's outside—

The world outside can't keep men satisfied.

The lion said, 'I'll knock him to the floor!

1310

Check whether he's inside just as before!

'But I'm consumed by fear and want to hide!

Would you perhaps protect me by your side,

So, generous lion, safe within your shade,

I then can look down and not be afraid?'

*The lion peers down the well and sees his own
 reflection and that of the hare*

The lion came and held the hare so near

That he proceeded, purged of all his fear,

They both peered down to find the enemy—

Their own reflection was all they could see:

The lion saw cast on the water there

1315

His own reflection next to a plump hare—

Thinking he'd found his foe, he then leapt in,
Which meant the hare could go back to his kin!
His foe fell in the pit of his own crime—

His sins came back to haunt him one last time!
Oppressors' crimes are wells devoid of light,

All scholars have confirmed that this is right—
The worst oppressors dig a deeper well,

Justice requires a fate far worse than hell!
For personal profit wickedly behave

1320

And you'll be simply digging your own grave!
Don't spin webs round yourself like silkworms do,

Nor dig your own grave now without a clue!
And don't imagine weak men have no friend,

Recite: *When God's help comes** until the end!
The elephant whose enemy had fled

Then earned the wrath of *birds in flocks** instead:
A weak man who requests security

Will hear war cries from heaven's cavalry!
If you should bite and make him bleed, you'll earn
A painful toothache! Then where will you turn?

1325

Being too keen when looking down the well,

His rival from himself he could not tell,
The lion thought his image was his foe

And swung with force to deal himself a blow!
The things you see in others which offend

Are just your own faults shown through them, my friend:
Your being's mirror-image lets you see

Your cruelty, baseness, and hypocrisy,
You're beating up yourself—the foe is you!

1330

You're swearing at yourself and cursing too!
Your own bad faults if only you could see

You'd then become your own fierce enemy!
You've pounced upon yourself, you simpleton,

It's just as mad as what this lion's done!
On reaching your own nature's depths, you'll know
The vileness comes from you and not your foe.

To this sad lion it was clear at last:

The other was the image he had cast!

If you pull out a weak man's teeth, that's worse 1335

Than this dumb beast whose eyes became his curse.

You've found a blemish on your uncle's face,

It's not his fault, it's you who's the disgrace:

'Believers are each other's mirrors',* friend.

The Prophet said this—won't you comprehend?

You're wearing lenses tinted funeral blue

And so this world is dark with grief to you—

Unless you're blind, accept that you're the source,

Then blame yourself and not an outside force!

If faithful men do not see by God's light 1340

Then why is the unseen within their sight?

Through fire and not His light, your eyes have seen,

That's why they can't tell good things from obscene!

So, drop by drop, pour water on the pyre

To turn to light this all-consuming fire.

Pour cleansing light on us, O Lord, I pray,

To change this world of fire to light this way!

The ocean's waters follow Your command,

All water and all fire is in Your hand,

If You choose, waves will turn to flames of fire 1345

And flames to water if that's Your desire,

The urge to seek the truth You gave us Lord,

To flee injustice was Your kind reward,

You gave this urge to us without request

And opened up to us Your treasure-chest.

*The hare brings the news about the lion falling in the
well to the other animals*

The hare escaped like this through his shrewd plan,

To celebrate towards the rest he ran,

He'd seen the lion humbled now and slain

And so he cartwheeled all across the plain.

On fleeing death the hare began to clap

1350

And dance like leaves which in the breeze would flap;

Both branch and leaf like this escape earth's gaol—

They lift their heads and with the wind set sail:

When leaves burst forth from branches, they ascend

Up to the tree's most high and furthest end;

Using the words of God who said, '*It sprouts*'.

The praise of God each leaf and fruit then shouts:

The Giver nourished every root of ours

Until our trees *stood tall and straight** like towers.

Souls that are bound in bodies made of clay

1355

Feel ecstasy when they can fly away,

They dance to songs of passionate, sacred love,

Expanding like the full moon high above,

Dancing inside as well as outwardly,

Whirling around their souls which we can't see.

He'd gaoled the lion, who now burnt with shame,

A lion hares can slay must be so tame!

Although he was thus taken for a ride

This lion claims the title of 'Faith's Pride'!*

He's in the empty well, abandoned there,

1360

Slain by his carnal soul, not just the hare.

Your donkey self feeds in the open plain,

You're down the well bound by your questioning's chain.

The lion-slayer rushed back home to sing,

'Rejoice, dear kin, good news is what I bring:

It's time to celebrate and sing our songs,

That dog from hell is back where he belongs!

Our own survival's foe has lost the bout,

The lion's maker pulled his teeth all out;

That one who loved to bully, pounce, and bash

1365

The broom of death has brushed away like trash!

The beasts of prey gather round the hare to praise him

They formed a circle there immediately,

Happy and laughing, wild with ecstasy—

He was the torch around whom they all stood

And bowed while shouting, 'Heavens, this is good!

Are you an angel or a spirit-friend?

Or Azrael, who tells foes it's the end?

We'd give our lives no matter who you are,

May you stay strong and fit, victorious star!

Since God diverted water to your stream,

1370

"Bravo!" to both your hands and arms we scream!

Please tell us how you thought up this fine trap

And rubbed it in his face with a hard slap!

Tell us, and let the tale become our cure,

The balm to make our souls feel quite secure,

For that cruel tyrant's constant wickedness

Wounded our souls and caused so much distress.'

The hare said, 'Friends, it was God's loving care—

Without that what on earth is a mere hare!

He gave me strength and made my heart shine bright,

1375

My hands and feet were strengthened by that light;

From God come both kind favours such as these

And wrathfulness that brings you to your knees:

In turn, God shows his sheer beneficence

To those who ask to see some evidence.

The hare advises the other animals: 'Don't celebrate merely this!'

'Now don't rejoice in wealth that's temporary,

Victim of time, don't eat as though you're free!

When one has wealth beyond vicissitude

The drums of heaven make this understood;

Eternal kings by time are never bound,

1380

Their spirits with the Saqi circle round—

Stop drinking here for just a little while,

Sip the eternal wine, and always smile.'

*Interpretation of 'We have returned from the lesser
jihad to the greater jihad'**

Dear kings, we've killed the enemy outside,

A worse foe still remains for us inside:

Your brain does not know how to kill this foe:

A hare can't bring this inner lion low!

The self is hell, a dragon wishing harm,

The sea can't cool it down or keep it calm:

I drank the seven seas, was fully drenched, 1385

That human-burner's thirst was still not quenched!

The infidels, whose hearts are hard as stones,

Enter this fire, ashamed, with screams and groans,

But hell's not sated by such food at all,

At least until the Lord should finally call:

'Are you full yet?' The glutton answers, 'No!

Can you not see from there my burning glow!'

It makes the world a morsel, swallows it,

Then screams, '*Is there not still another bit?*'*

God stamps on it from Placelessness,* before 1390

*Be! And it was,** makes it feel full once more.

Our stubborn selfhood is a part of hell,

Parts show the nature of the whole so well,

It's God who must deal out the fatal blow—

Who else can pull the string to fire this bow?

Straight arrows only will God's bow admit,

Your bow holds arrows crooked, bent, and split:

To leave the bow the arrow must be straight,

It then won't fail to fly and penetrate.

When from the outward fight I turned around 1395

The war inside our soul was what I found:

'*The small jihad we have just left behind*'

For a jihad of a much greater kind;

The strength from God is what I long to win

Which can uproot Mount Qaf with just a pin,

Don't overrate the lion which can kill!

The one who breaks himself is greater still.

*The emissary from Byzantium comes to Omar, the
Commander of the Faithful* and sees his miracles*

Now listen to this story, which spells out
 Some of the secrets you've been told about:
 A man came to Omar once from the west, 1400
 Through deserts till Medina with no rest:
 'The Caliph's palace—please show me the way!
 I need to ride there with my load today.'
 'He doesn't have a palace,' he was told,
 'Except his soul, illumined like pure gold;
 His well-earned fame as leader is secure
 Though he lives in a hut just like the poor.'
 How can you see a palace of this kind
 When one stray hair has made your heart's eye blind?
 Rid your heart's eye of hair to have a prayer 1405
 Of seeing this great Caliph's palace there!
 Whoever's soul is free from lust has found
 Admittance to God's kingdom's hallowed ground:
 Mohammad, purged of fire and smoke's last trace,
 Whichever way he turned saw just *God's face*,*
 While you are still the evil whisperer's friend
There is God's face how can you comprehend?
 If you've an opening in your heart you'll see
 The sun's bright rays wherever you may be—
 In everything God can be seen through love 1410
 Just like the moon among the stars above.
 If you place fingertips upon each eye,
 Can you see anything at all? Don't lie!
 Though you can't see things, they all still exist;
 The fault lies curled inside your self's tight fist—
 Just lift the fingers from your eyes, to then
 Observe whatever you should want again.
 Noah, when asked, 'Where's the reward?' replied,
 'Beyond *beneath their clothes their heads they hide*'*

You've hidden it beneath your clothes; that's why
You still can't see although you have an eye!
A man's his eye, he's mere skin otherwise
For the beloved's only seen by eyes,
If they can't see him, then they're better blind,
That's best for idols of a transient kind.

1415

On hearing this, the messenger grew keen
To reach his goal, more than he'd ever been,
Omar with his own eyes he wished to find,
And so he left his horse and load behind
To search for this great master everywhere
Just like a madman with no other care:
'Can such a man exist—can this be true?
He's hidden like the soul—what can we do?'
He sought to serve him like a slave in need—
Such seekers always in the end succeed.
An Arab woman saw him come, and said,
'Omar lies near that tree as if in bed:
Far from the people under that date-palm
God's Shadow* sleeps in shade where it is calm.'

1420

*The emissary from Byzantium finds the Commander of
the Faithful* sleeping under the tree*

The man approached, but wouldn't go too near,
On seeing him his body shook with fear—
Awe of a sleeping man left him undone,
A blissful state now filled him like the sun;
Such contradictory states as love and awe
Together in his heart the stranger saw,
Saying inside, 'A thousand kings I've seen
Who honoured me, with sultans too I've been,
But fear had never given me such fits—
Now awe of this man's robbed me of my wits!
Jungles of lions even I've explored
And not turned pale, however much they roared,

1425

1430

And on the battlefield I've earned renown
 For acting bravely when the rest are down—
 I've taken and dealt out such mighty blows
 For I'm the bravest, everybody knows.
 This man lies sound asleep and he's unarmed
 So why do I now shake and feel alarmed?
 It's awe of God, not just a human being,
 A man dressed in a gown that I'm now seeing.'
 Whoever's path is fear of God will find 1435
 That he is feared by jinn and all mankind.
 With folded hands in a submissive pose
 He stood until Omar woke and arose,
 He then saluted him and bowed his head:
 'First say salaam, then talk!' the Prophet said.*
 Omar responded, told him to come near
 And to sit next to him and have no fear:
 'Don't fear!'^{*} for scared men is quite suitable,
 But not for those who aren't afraid at all:
 The scared are reassured they won't be harmed— 1440
 By this advice, their fearful hearts are calmed;
 Why say 'Don't fear!' to one who isn't scared?
 This is a lesson brave men should be spared!
 Omar thus helped a troubled heart to find
 Abundant happiness and peace of mind,
 With subtleties that few can comprehend
 About God's attributes, our greatest friend!
 He spoke of God's love for his true élite
 And of the states and stations one could meet:
 The state is the unveiling of the bride, 1445
 The station's being alone with her inside,*
 For her unveiling's seen by every guest
 But with the groom alone the bride will rest—
 The bride unveils for every onlooker
 But afterwards he lies alone with her!
 So many Sufis have enjoyed a state
 But few know of the stations that await.
 Omar taught him the journey of the soul,
 Spiritual travelling to the furthest goal,

And of the time which stands beyond all time, 1450
That lofty station, sacred and sublime,
And of the realm in which the spirit flew—
Before this life both flight and grace it knew,
Seeing beyond horizons coast to coast,
The utmost faith and zeal it then could boast.
Thus, when Omar saw that he was a friend,
He knew this man desired to comprehend:
The shaikh was perfect and the student keen,
The rider fast, the thoroughbred so lean.
The guide saw he would suit the brotherhood, 1455
Then sowed good seed in soil he knew was good.

*The emissary from Byzantium questions the
Commander of the Faithful*

‘Commander of the Faithful,* please expound
For me how spirit came down to the ground:
How did that bird become caged in a cell?’
He said, ‘God chanted to the soul a spell;
The non-existents have no ear nor eye,
But when God chants a spell they stir and fly,
His spells give non-existents such a jolt
That to existence they all somersault!
And when existents hear God’s formula 1460
To non-existence their route’s similar.’
The rose smiled once He’d chanted to its stem,
His spell has made a stone turn to a gem,
Bodies transformed to souls by just one line,
His words have also caused the sun to shine,
But dark words whispered sometimes to its ear
Have made eclipses of the sun appear;
He also made the clouds perform the task
Of weeping tears just like a water-flask—
What spells He must have whispered to the ground 1465
To make it think, but not make any sound!
Whoever is perplexed by doubt and fear—
The Lord will chant a riddle in his ear

To hold him captive with this thought a bit,
 ‘Shall I obey or do the opposite?’
 God’s preference is implicit for one side;
 This factor helps the doubter to decide.
 You don’t want to be plagued by doubts and fears?
 Then put less cotton wool inside your ears
 To hear those riddles that the Lord will tell, 1470
 The secret hints he gives, the clear as well—
 Your spirit’s ear will hear His revelation.
 What’s that? It’s speech that’s far beyond sensation!

Spiritual ears and eyes transcend mere sense,
 While rational ones can only claim pretence.
 The word ‘*compulsion*’* spurs my heart ahead
 While those who lack love feel ensnared instead,
 It’s not compulsion but divine communion,
 Not clouds, but the full moon in total union;
 If it’s compulsion it’s a special kind, 1475
 Not that commanding self’s* type which is blind:
 Compulsion like this few identify,
 God’s given these men’s hearts an inner eye—
 Hidden things and the future they can see,
 Mentioning the past near them is blasphemy!
 For them compulsion’s different as well:
 Drops turn to pearls inside an oyster shell,
 However big each drop looks to your eyes
 It forms a pearl exactly the same size;
 This group are like the gland of the musk deer: 1480
 Inside there’s musk though this may not be clear:
 ‘There’s only blood around this gland,’ men claim,
 ‘How can it turn to musk scent all the same?’
 They say, ‘This copper’s hideous; I don’t see,
 How it can turn to gold through alchemy.’
 You found compulsion and free will in form,
 For them, to God’s own light it can transform:
 Bread on the table is inanimate
 But forms a living part inside your gut,

Unchanging on the table where you dine, 1485
 The soul transmutes it with some heavenly wine—
 The soul has strength to carry out this role;
 What then the power of God, who rules the soul!
 Man would be merely flesh but for his heart,
 Both seas and mountains he can split apart:
 The heart splits rocks, lifts mountains through the sky,
 God's verse *He split the moon** proves I don't lie—
 Just lift the cover of this mystery,
 Your soul will seek God's Throne then eagerly.

*How Adam attributed that error to himself, saying 'O Lord, we have wronged ourselves!'** *And how Satan attributed his own sin to God Almighty, saying 'Since you have sent me astray!'**

Let us compare our acts with God's now here, 1490
 Consider our acts real—this much is clear:
 If acts aren't by creation, there's no need
 To ask, 'Why did you do that awful deed?'
 God gives acts being for they're His creation.
 Each act of ours is God's manifestation.*
 In words men see the meaning or its form,
 They can't see both at once, this is the norm:
 Choosing its meaning, form he throws away,
 No one can look both ways at once, can they?
 When you are looking straight in front of you 1495
 How can you see what's there behind you too?
 Meaning and form aren't both in its control
 So how can their creator be your soul?
 The Lord encompasses all things, my son,
 For Him one act won't stop another one.
 'You led astray', though Satan claimed, he lied:
 His own deeds that vile devil tried to hide.
 'We've wronged ourselves': when Adam thus confessed
 He still knew acts are God's—he spoke the best:
 Out of respect he said it was his sin, 1500
 Through bearing this, more favour he would win;

He then repented. God said, 'Didn't I
 Create that crime in you—Why did you lie?
 Wasn't it all because of my decree?
 Why did you take responsibility?'
 He said, 'Through fear I kept respect for you.'
 God said, 'I've kept in mind your actions too.'
 Whoever shows respect, respect will meet:
 Bring halva and you'll eat an almond sweet.
 For whose sake are *good women*? For *good men*!* 1505
 Spread joy! Hurt friends and see what they do then!
 Produce a fitting parable, O heart,
 Compulsion from free will to tell apart:
 The hands of sick men which shake constantly
 And those hands which you shake deliberately,
 Both movements God creates, in that they share,
 But these two pairs of hands you can't compare:
 You may regret you forced their hands to shake,
 But sick men can't be blamed, for heaven's sake!
 The intellect explores these words I speak 1510
 For it's a fox which tries to lead the weak;
 Though pearls may be on offer as the goal
 Its quest's unlike the journey of the soul:
 Spiritual quests are on a different sphere,
 Like mystic wine and wine fermented here;
 When intellectual quests were the top aim
 Omar and Bu'l-Hakam were just the same,
 Omar then chose his soul before his head
 And Bu'l-Hakam became Bu Jahl instead,
 In intellect as perfect as can be, 1515
 But the most ignorant man inwardly!
 A secondary cause is the brain's quest,
 The mystic's quest lies far above the rest!
 The soul's light shone, O seeker of God's light,
 Then logic's quarrels disappeared like night,
 Because the seer on whom God's light rays shine
 Supporting proofs can't hinder nor confine.

*Commentary on 'He is with you wherever you may be'**

We've come back to the tale we had in mind,
How could we ever leave that tale behind?
If we meet ignorance, to gaol we're bound, 1520
If knowledge then His palace we have found;
When we're asleep we're drunk, then for His sake
We're back in His hands also when awake,
When weeping we're an ostentatious cloud,
Then lightning when we start to laugh aloud,
We show His anger when we fight with men,
His love when we forgive, at peace again—
Who are we, coiled and twisted like a string?
What's straight apart from 1? Name me one thing!

*The emissary asks Omar about the reason for the suffering
of spirits in bodies of water and clay*

He asked, 'Omar, what aim's behind this plot 1525
To lock pure beings in a filthy spot?
Pure water's hidden when it's sprayed on ground,
Pure souls in bodies likewise have been bound.'
He said, 'Your question seems to be quite apt—
Pure meaning in a word you've tightly wrapped:
You've shackled what was once free like a bird
As you have trapped the wind inside a word—
Have you done this to make a personal gain
Though you can't see what spirits thus attain?
The one from whom all benefits arise 1530
Can surely see what you've seen with your eyes!
A million benefits are here, and all
Compared with that one are extremely small,
Your speech's breath is part of what is whole,
So don't deny pure being its true role!
Though but a part, your acts help all the same—
Don't raise your hands and give the whole the blame!

If talking has no value, speak no more
 Or else give thanks, don't be so mean and sore;
 To thank's to place a halter round your neck, 1535
 Not quarrelling about a tiny speck,
 If it meant to look sour only, then
 Mere vinegar would thank God more than men!
 If vinegar must penetrate the liver
 Tell it, 'Turn to a healing brew with sugar!'—
 Meaning in verse is nothing but insane,
 It's like a sling which no one can restrain!

*On the meaning of 'Let whoever wants to sit with
 God sit with the Sufis'**

This made the messenger lose self-control,
 Forgetting all about his mission's goal:
 The power of God left him completely dazed, 1540
 He came, and to a higher state was raised;
 On reaching it, a flood becomes the sea,
 In soil a seed may grow to form a tree,
 When bread is in our gut it comes alive,
 And soaks up knowledge, which helps all things thrive,
 When wax and timber both are set alight
 Their essence, which was dark, becomes so bright,
 If you apply some kohl around your eye
 You'll learn to see as well as any spy:
 Happy the man who from himself is free 1545
 And joins with Being in true unity,
 Alas the one who mixes with the dead—
 He'll die himself because he's been misled.
 So many prophets the Koran extols—
 Read it! Become familiar with their souls!
 For it describes each one's biography
 As fish in the sea of divinity.
 If you recite but don't accept the Book
 You've turned them down although you've had a look,
 If you accept the stories on each page 1550
 You'll feel your soul's a bird trapped in a cage;

The reason that the caged bird settles there
And doesn't flee is that it's unaware.
Spirits which have escaped from their constraints
Are fit to guide like prophets and like saints;
Their voices speak of faith when they should say:
'This is your one escape route—come this way!'
Through faith we have escaped the narrow cell—
There is no other way out of this hell
Than to be seen as suffering what's worse, 1555
In order to flee reputation's curse,
For reputation's such a heavy chain—
Much worse than iron chains in this domain.

*The story about the merchant to whom his caged parrot
gave a message for the parrots of India when he was
due to go there for trade*

A merchant kept his parrot so confined
Inside a cage you'd think he was unkind,
But when he planned to make a trip for trade
To India where the finest goods were made,
To all his servants he went down to say,
'What shall I buy for you while I'm away?'
They listed things on which their hearts were set 1560
And he swore that he never would forget;
He asked the parrot, 'What would you prefer
That I should bring for you from India?'
The bird said, 'When you see the parrots there
Please tell them all about my sad affair:
Tell them a parrot pines continually
To see you, but she's caged by fate's decree;
She sends her greetings and she asks for justice,
She wants to learn the faith you parrots practise;
She says, "Should I stay longing here for you 1565
In exile, and then give my life up too?
Should I stay in this cage—can this be right,
While in the woods and meadows you take flight?

Where now is our famed solidarity?

While I'm in gaol the rest of you are free!

My noble friends, remember this poor bird

And drink to me tomorrow—spread the word!

If friends remember one, then one is blest,

Majnun's love for his Layli though was best!

In fine surroundings you recline and think,

1570

While I just have my blood left now to drink!

So down a glass of wine for my sake, friends;

If you don't want to try to make amends,

Remembering one who's fallen in the dust

You'll pour the dregs upon the ground, I trust.

What happened to the oath that we all swore—

Don't promises you make count any more?

Have I deserved my fate for some offence,

If you hurt sinners what's the difference?"'

The harm You cause in war and retribution

1575

Delights me more than musical audition,*

Good fortune can't match torture that's from You,

Your wrath is dearer than my own life too!

This is Your fire—how great must be Your light:

The funeral's now, the party starts tonight!

Because of sweetness in Your wrathfulness

None know the full depth of Your tenderness,

I moan, but fear that He might answer me

By kindly softening his tyranny—

I'm smitten by his wrath and kindness too,

1580

My love for opposites amazes you!

If I escape these thorns now for a rose

A nightingale's lament I will compose—

Strange nightingale whose mouth is open wide

To fit both thorns and roses now inside!

That's no bird but a fiery dragon there:

Love's made all seem to him so sweet and fair!

He loves the Whole, which is here and above—

He loves himself thus, and seeks his own love!

Description of the wings of the birds of divine intelligences

The parrot's tale now seems appropriate, 1585
With bird-like souls find one who's intimate,
One like a weak obedient bird outside
With Solomon and armies deep inside!
When he should wail without complaint or praise
An uproar sets the seven spheres ablaze;
Each breath for him God's messages appear:
He cries, 'O Lord!' God says, 'I'm always here!'*
For God, his sins excel mere blind obedience,
Next to his unbelief, pure faith is nonsense.
Each moment privately to God he's led, 1590
A hundred crowns God places on his head,
His form's from earth, his soul is from *No-place*,*
Beyond the dreams that travellers can chase,
Not somewhere which the mind can comprehend
From where a telling clue might once descend;
By him the world and *No-place* are controlled
Like those four rivers ruled by heaven's fold;*
Cut short the explanation, turn around,
God knows what's best, don't make another sound!
Let's now resume what started earlier 1595
About the bird, the merchant, India:
The merchant then said 'Yes' to her request
To give her message there at her behest.

*The merchant sees the parrots of India in the countryside
and delivers the message for that parrot*

He entered India, travelled deep inside,
Then saw some parrots in the countryside:
He drew his steed back, shouted to the birds,
To keep his promise he passed on her words—
One of the birds shook violently then dropped,
She fell just like a corpse, her breathing stopped!

He then repented that he'd brought the news: 1600
 'I've killed this creature, what is left to lose!
 Was she one of my parrot's relatives,
 The same soul which in separate bodies lives?
 Why did I tell them when she's out of reach?
 I've burnt the poor thing's heart with my crude speech!

The tongue and stone on iron are the same:
 What leaps out from your tongue's tip is a flame—
 Don't strike the stone on iron for you'll roast
 For telling stories or just for a boast!
 We're in a field of cotton in the dark 1605
 So don't you carelessly create a spark!
 In darkness tyrants choose to shut their eyes
 And with their words allow the flames to rise:
 A world can be destroyed by what is said
 And foxes turn to lions thus instead.
 Spirits like Christ's breath give new life to you,
 First as a wound, then as a plaster too,
 If spirits were unveiled, it would be known
 Their speech is just like the Messiah's own.
 If you want something sweet to say, hold on! 1610
 Don't grab them greedily before they're gone:
 Through self-restraint the clever men reach higher,
 Sweets are what simple children all desire—
 You can ascend to God with self-control,
 Choose sweets and you'll sink farther from the goal.

*Commentary on the saying of ʿAttar: 'You have an ego, heedless
 one, drink your own blood while on earth, for if mystics drink
 poison it will become an antidote'**

The mystic is not harmed one bit if he
 Should drink down deadly poison knowingly:
 When you have true health why choose abstinence
 Though others suffer if they touch it once:

The Prophet said, 'Wise man, just turn aside,
Don't challenge one who's sought out as a guide!'
With Nimrod in you, don't approach the flame,
Become first Abraham to do the same—
You don't know how to swim or sail in there,
Don't dive in vainly just to show you dare!
He can pull out a red rose from the fire,
From loss he can send profits soaring higher,
His touch turns earth to gold in just a flash,
While gold imperfect men touch turns to ash:
God has accepted him, so understand
In all he does his hand is like God's hand,
The hands of others are the devil's own,
In their abuse and lies it's clearly shown;
Ignorance turns to knowledge with pure men,
It's ignorance with infidels again,
A sick man spreads to others pain and grief,
A perfect man turns sin to true belief—
While standing don't fight someone on a steed,
Step back, there is no way you can succeed!

*The reverence of the magicians towards Moses, whom they asked,
'What do you wish—would you like to cast your rod first?'**

In Pharaoh's reign magicians set a date
To challenge Moses, object of their hate,
But these men still showed Moses deference,
These vain magicians showed much reverence
By saying, 'You choose when, O Messenger,
And throw your rod down first if you prefer.'
Moses said, 'No, magicians I implore
That you throw down your tricks first on the floor.'
They earned God's grace by being subservient,
This cut their power and means of argument:
When they acknowledged who he was this time,
They lost the power to carry out their crime.
Each morsel and each word is lawful too
For the perfected, not for men like you!

While you're an ear, this man's a tongue, you see,
 And God told all men '*Listen!*' * Didn't he?
 Each baby when it's born screams out its fears
 But then stays silent for a while, all ears;
 For hours it has to keep its small lips sealed
 Till speech's secret should become revealed,
 And if it doesn't listen, but just cries 1635
 It's the most stupid thing beneath the skies!
 The one born deaf who's never heard a word
 Is mute, how can speech move him—that's absurd!
 To learn to speak, first hearing's necessary,
 Through hearing learn how to speak properly:
 '*Enter their houses by their doors!*' * He said,
Seek through their cause the outcomes up ahead!
 Speech not in need of hearing is unknown
 Apart from God's desire-free speech alone,
 For the Creator follows no one's lead, 1640
 We're helped by Him, of help He has no need.
 In making things and speaking we've relied
 On teachers or a pattern that can guide—
 If these words haven't left you in a shock
 Start weeping now and wear a dervish frock!
 Adam's tears freed him from admonishment,
 Tears are the breaths of those who're penitent,
 Adam came down to earth so he could grieve,
 To weep for what he'd done and then take leave:
 He came from Eden and the seventh heaven 1645
 To beg and plead that he might be forgiven,
 So if you're really Adam's progeny
 Then keep on striving in his company—
 Blend in your tears with fire to make a sweet:
 The orchard blooms through rain and solar heat.
 What do you know about how tears might taste?
 You just love bread like blind men—what a waste!
 Empty your belly that you've filled with bread
 Then fill it up with precious jewels instead!
 It's devil's milk you've fed your infant soul, 1650
 Take it to angels—feed it from their bowl!

When you are weary, gloomy, and depressed,
You must be feeding from the devil's breast;
The food which can increase light and perfection
Is paid for through a lawful occupation;
And oil which puts the lamp out we should call
'Water', it can't be really oil at all:
Knowledge and wisdom lawful meals produce*
And love and tenderness they can induce,
While morsels filled with envy which can snare
Are all unlawful—ignorance breeds there!
Have you sown wheat then seen just barley rise,
A horse give birth to donkeys—don't tell lies!
Pure food is like a seed, its fruit's pure thought,
And it's a sea, while thought's the jewel sought;
With longing, lawful food will overwhelm
Your heart, so it can reach the highest realm.

1655

*The merchant relates to his parrot what he saw of
the parrots in India*

The merchant on completing all his trade
Returned home, not prepared to be delayed,
He brought a present back for every slave
And to the slave-girls souvenirs he gave.
The parrot asked, 'Where's what I chose instead?
Please tell me what you saw and what was said.'
He said, 'No, for all that I now repent,
With biting fingernails my hours are spent—
Why did I say it? It was premature!
Through ignorance, or is my judgement poor?'
'Master, what's this repentance for?' she said,
What's brought this rage and grief inside your head?'
He said, 'I passed on your complaint once there
To birds like you, who flew without a care—
One of them felt your pain so much she cried,
Her frail heart broke, she shuddered, fell, and died!
Why did I say this for my little pet!
Ah, now it's done what use is my regret!'

1660

1665

Regard the words you utter with your tongue
 A dangerous arrow which you have just flung;
 An arrow can't be brought back from its course—
 We have to block the torrent at its source;
 Floods can submerge the world each time they rise, 1670
 If they destroy the world that's no surprise,
 Actions bring forth effects beyond our goal,
 Unseen effects beyond our own control,
 The Lord created them, let this be clear,
 Though they're attributed to us down here:
 Jim once was shot at by a man named Jack;
 The arrows flew like leopards in attack;
 A year passed, but Jim's suffering wouldn't end.
 The Lord creates all pain, not Man, my friend:
 Even if Jack, on shooting, fell, and died, 1675
 This wouldn't have made Jim's deep pain subside,
 But since this pain led to the death of Jim
 For triggering it, we say Jack murdered him—
 Pin all the blame on Jack that Jim was slain
 Even though God created all the pain!*
 Breath, sex, and sowing are comparable,
 They're all effects which God makes possible:

The saints have gained from God such awesome might
 That they can pull back arrows in mid-flight:
 Effects which stem from the original cause 1680
 When saints repent are then compelled to pause:
 By grace he makes unsaid what has been said
 So no harm comes to anybody's head,
 From all the hearts which heard that harmful word
 He wipes it out, unseen now and unheard!
 Dear gentlemen, if you need proof it's true
*A verse we cause you to forget** should do,
They caused you to forget, don't be upset,
 Observe their power to make you forget:
 Then they made you forget, now they remind, 1685
 And thus they rule the hearts of all mankind.

When you are blinded with forgetfulness
You're impotent, your skills could not count less,
Though *you thought them a joke*, they have God's might,
As far as *they made you forget* recite!*

Landlords may rule your bodies, not your soul,
That's in the owner of the heart's control,
Deeds are derived from sight, please realize
That men are just the pupils in their eyes—
Its explanation I am forced to hide 1690
By barriers put up by those inside.
Since all forgetfulness and memory
Depend on Him, He'll answer every plea:
Thousands of good and evil things each night
He empties from men's hearts and out of sight,
By day He pours them in their hearts once more—
Refilling shells with pearls they used to store—
Knowledge of things we used to utilize
God's guidance helps our souls to recognize—
Your skills and talents all return to you 1695
To let you keep on doing what you do:
The jeweller's skills don't reach mere ironmongers,
A good man's virtue won't reach vile warmongers,
Your skills and virtues like your property
Will be returned on Judgment Day, you'll see,
Just as they do when from your sleep you wake—
Back to the rightful owner, no mistake,
Returning from that place that can't be seen,
Where good and evil thoughts had also been,
Like carrier pigeons which have been abroad 1700
They bring back to their home a wondrous horde.

*The parrot hears about the actions of those other parrots and
then dies in her cage, so the owner laments for her*

About the other birds when she was told
His parrot trembled, fell, was knocked out cold,
On seeing her fall like the one before
The merchant leapt, his cap fell on the floor;

When he saw her look like she'd nearly died
 He tore his jacket open, and then cried,
 'O darling parrot, sweeter than a kiss,
 What's happened to you, why are you like this?
 My sweet-voiced bird, please say it's not the end! 1705
 Alas, my confidante and closest friend!
 My parrot had a singing voice so fine
 And smelt like basil, she was my soul's wine!
 If Solomon had had a bird so rare
 He'd have forgotten all the rest, I swear!
 Alas, this bird for whom I didn't pay,
 Which led me then to easily turn away.
 O tongue, you hurt so many everywhere,
 Since you keep talking what can I declare!
 O tongue, you're like both fire and stacks of hay; 1710
 How long will you set them alight this way?
 The soul mourns secretly because of you
 Although it does the things you tell it to,
 But you are treasure too which will endure
 As well as pain for which there is no cure;
 Just like the hunter's whistle you deceive,
 But then console the trapped birds when they grieve—
 How long will you keep offering sanctuary,
 You who, in hatred, draw your bow at me!
 You've made my bird fly off due to distrust, 1715
 Stop acting like you're born to be unjust!
 Please answer me or let me have redress
 Or give me reasons to feel happiness!
 Alas, that light which burnt the dark away,
 Alas the dawn that brightened every day:
 Alas that bird which flew so beautifully,
 From one end to the other deep in me!
 Until the end, heart, sing my love-sick grief:
 "*I swear*" until "*in hardship*", for relief!*"

I fled from pain through love of your kind face, 1720
 Then, in your stream, of scum I felt no trace!
 I cry, imagining you in the distance
 While cut off from my blissful past existence;

God's jealousy's* the cause—what can one do!
Which heart by His love wasn't torn in two!
Since He's alone, beyond all other things,
Our explanations and our mutterings,
Would that my tears were waves of a vast sea
That spray on my beloved constantly.
My parrot was a most perceptive bird,
Translator of my thoughts that were unheard:
My lot and what would be held back as well
Right from the very start she could foretell.'

1725

That bird's voice came from revelation's source,
Her birth before existence took its course,
Inside one this true parrot is concealed,
Through her reflection everything's revealed,
She takes away your joy, but you don't care,
You even swear her tyranny is fair!
Lighting your spirit for your body's sake—
You've burnt your spirit, now the rest must bake:
I am on fire, get tinder here for free,
So you can set your scraps alight through me!
For setting things on fire since tinder's fit
Come, take this tinder which is easily lit!
It's such a shame that ravishing full moon
Was clouded over by the fog so soon!
How can I speak now that my heart's ablaze:
My exile's lion's hungry, in a daze—
When sober violent, and when drunk he's mad,
Picture him after all the wine he's had;
The drunken lion is beyond all words,
Too big for pastures which can hold vast herds!

1730

1735

I think of rhymes, but the Beloved says:
'Just for my face reserve your constant gaze!
Sit comfortably my rhyme-enthusiast,
To me you rhyme with fortune that will last.

Words aren't for lovers to reflect upon:

What then are words? Around vines, they're a thorn,
Word, sound, and speech I strike relentlessly 1740

So I can talk to you without these three.

The word I kept from Adam all these years,

My secret, I'll now whisper in your ears,
What I would not tell Abraham I'll tell

And things that Gabriel doesn't know as well.'

The words that the Messiah couldn't say,

Even without *maa*, here God won't convey—

What's *maa*?* It can affirm, and it negates,

I'm not affirmed, for love annihilates!

I've found a person in a nobody, 1745

An individual and non-entity,

For every king's subservient to his slave—

Men die for those who for them choose their grave:

Before prostraters kings fall down prostrate,

And sober people drunks intoxicate,

The hunter changes to the birds' own prey

To make them his own victim in this way,

The lovesick seek their sweethearts with their soul,

Their sweethearts are their prey, this is their role.

Regard each lover as beloved too 1750

Since it depends on just your point of view,

For if the thirsty search for water, then

That means the water's seeking thirsty men.

Since he's in love keep quiet, there's no harm,

And if he grabs your ear, let him, stay calm—

No, dam the rising flood, don't let it loose

To shame us all with damaging abuse!

If there's destruction now why should I care?

The ruins hide a royal treasure there.

Those drowned in God want more, they want it all, 1755

Just like the tide, their souls rise up, then fall,

The ocean's depths or surface—which is best?

An arrow or a shield—which worthiest?

You must have been ripped up by whisperings, heart,

If you can still tell joy and pain apart—

You lust for sugar, don't you know it's true
 Beloved God wants lack of lust from you?
For moons he puts out all the stars at night,
 To kill the whole world he has every right!
We've also earned from God a high blood-price, 1760
 By offering up our lives as sacrifice:
The lover's life is found in death: it's known
 You'll earn a heart by giving up your own.

I sought his heart, but had so many cares,
 He made excuses, weary of my airs:
I claimed, 'My soul is drowned in you, you know!'
 He said, 'Stop chanting spells at me—just go!'
I know well what you tried then to insist
 When you saw the Beloved, dualist!
You've held Him in such low regard, you fool, 1765
 Because you bought Him cheaply—heed the rule:
If you've bought cheaply, cheaply you'll resell:
 A child will swap a pearl for bread—heed well!
Inside the same pure love I now have drowned
 As that which lovers of the past have found,
I don't explain it all, but summarize,
 My tongue would burn itself up otherwise:
When I say 'lip', read: 'borders by the sea',
 When I say '*none*', read: '*but*' the Deity!*
Because of sweetness I look bitter now, 1770
 I've talked too much, now silence is my vow,
So no one sees our sweetness, not one trace
 Behind the mask of my most bitter face,
Since they're not suitable for everyone
 Of countless secrets I'll divulge just one:

Explanation of the saying of the Hakim: 'If something holds you back on the path, what does it matter whether it is infidelity or faith? If something leads you far from the beloved, what does it matter whether it is ugly or beautiful?' On the meaning of the Prophet's words: 'Sa'd is truly jealous, and I am more jealous than Sa'd, while God, who is even more jealous than me, has forbidden inward as well as outward foul deeds because of His jealousy.'*

The whole world's jealous, for God's jealousy
 Surpasses that of all humanity:
 He's like the soul, the world's His body-frame
 Which must accept from Him all things the same.
 If someone's prayer-niche faces certainty 1775
 To turn around to faith is treachery:
 If you're now waiting on the king, you'll lose
 If travelling off to trade instead you choose,
 If those now with the sultan later must
 Wait at the gate, they'll scream that it's unjust!
 He's brought his hands, so with your lips they'll meet—
 It's sinful now to choose to kiss his feet:
 Lowering your head down humbly in this case
 Is a mistake for which you'll earn disgrace!
 The king grows jealous if an onlooker 1780
 His perfume to his proud face should prefer,
 God's jealousy's like wheat in metaphor,
 Man's jealousy is thus a stack of straw,
 God is the root of every jealousy,
 Including envy plaguing you and me.

I'll stop explaining, so I can complain
 Of that much-worshipped beauty's gift of pain,
 Because it pleases Him I wail and moan,
 The two worlds must wail too, I'm not alone;
 How can I not complain when things are hard, 1785
 When from His drunkards' circle I've been barred—

Without His day I can't stop being night,
Of His bright face I still have not caught sight!
Unpleasantness from Him my soul thinks nice,
My spirit longs to be His sacrifice,
I am in love with all my pain and grief
To please my peerless king who brings relief!
My grief's dust I've dabbed round my ocean eyes
So they'll produce a pearl of massive size:
They're pearls not tears which we cry for His sake, 1790
If people think they're tears that's their mistake!
I moaned about the essence of our soul,
But I don't moan—transmitting is my role:
My heart says, 'The Beloved tortured me!'
I laugh at its lack of sincerity!
'Do good, O pride of good men,' I implore,
You're on your throne, I'm waiting at the door.
What's throne and threshold in reality,
What meaning have such terms as 'I' and 'we'?
O You whose soul has fled these and lives free, 1795
Each man and woman's spirit's subtlety—
When man and woman join, You are that 'one',
And when one is effaced You are that 'none'!
You made these I's and we's so You could play
The backgammon of worship every day,
So all these I's and we's can finally merge,
In their Beloved totally submerge.
Bring here the order '*Be!*'* for only You
Transcend all speech and all our wishes too.
The body thinks that You are one as well, 1800
Your grief and laughter it thinks it can tell—
A heart that's bound by joy and misery
Does not deserve to see You properly;
Those trapped in misery and laughter's snare
All live dependent on such borrowed ware.
Love's blooming garden which lives evermore
Apart from joy and grief has fruits galore—
Being a lover is beyond this pair,
Fresh always, in both spring and autumn air.

Pay tax on Your fair face,* light of my heart, 1805
 And speak about the soul that's torn apart,
 For teasing glances from this expert flirt
 Has branded this big heart inside my shirt;
 I let Him shed my blood, and then I say
 'It's lawful for You', but He runs away,
 Since from all men's laments You thus depart
 Why fill with grief each tired and aching heart?
 While each dawn sends out from the East its light,
 You are its source, full, shimmering and bright.
 Your frenzied lover how can You dismiss, 1810
 You whose sweet lips for no sum grant a kiss!
 To an old world a soul You can provide,
 I therefore wail I have no soul inside—
 Stop talking of the rose, describe for me
 The nightingale which must live separately:
 Our fervour does not come from joy or grief,
 Our consciousness is not a false belief,
 It's different, very rare and valuable—
 Don't say it can't be, God is capable!
 On someone's humble state please don't decide, 1815
 With doing good do not be satisfied:
 Good, evil, joy, and grief are transient states
 Which die and leave to God all their estates!

It's dawn, Our Refuge, who fills dawn with light,
 Please make Hosam forgive it took all night*—
 To grant forgiveness to us is Your role,
 The coral's splendour, You're the whole world's soul!
 Dawn's spread its light, now through the rays You shine
 We sit and drink Mansur's most potent wine*—
 Since Your kind gift makes me experience this 1820
 What need have I for earth's wine to feel bliss!
 Compared with ours, wine has no strength at all,
 Compared with our expansions heaven's small,
 All wine gets drunk through us, not us through it,
 Our form lives for us, not the opposite:

We're bees, our body's like the honeycomb,
Since through our soul we've built home after home.

Resumption of the story of the merchant

It is too long to detail in this text

In that last narrative what happened next:
The parrot's owner pined and burnt with pain, 1825
Muttering nonsense which now filled his brain—
Opposite states: in need, then haughtily,
True ecstasy, then metaphorically.
A drowning man believes he's going to die,
And grasps at straws that happen to drift by,
To see if one might save him from this strife
He flaps his arms to hold on to dear life!
The Loved One loves to see us scream and weep,
To struggle thus is better than to sleep;
The king is not without work, but he still 1830
Will never moan because he isn't ill,
And so the Merciful chose to declare,
'Each day He's busy with a new affair.'*
Persist in struggle till you meet your end,
Don't even take the slightest pause, my friend,
So that your final breath may be the one
Which wins the gift of mystic union;
Whatever men and women seek to try
Is noticed by the soul's king's watchful eye.

*The merchant flings the parrot out of the cage and
the dead bird flies away*

He emptied out the cage just like a cup; 1835
The parrot fell out, but then flew straight up,
The dead bird soared just like the solar ray
That rises in the East to start each day;
This left him dumbstruck, he could not see how:
Amazed, he sensed the parrot's secrets now;

He looked up, asked her, 'Parrot, won't you wait!
 Like nightingales explain our present state!
 Is it that Indian parrot's ways you've learned,
 To trick and roast me till my heart is burnt?'
 Yes, through her actions, she showed me how to 1840
 Give up my voice and loyalty to you:
 Since it's my voice for which I've been confined—
 She acted dead to bring this to my mind,
 To say, 'Sweet-singing bird, pretend like me,
 Just make yourself look dead and you'll be free.'
 If you're a seed, you're feed for every chick,
 If you're a bud, you're just what children pick;
 So hide the seed and be a snare instead,
 Change buds to roof straw there above your head;
 Whoever auctions off his own best trait 1845
 Will soon be sent the worst of luck by fate,
 Evil eyes, rages, jealousies begin
 To pour on him like water from a skin,
 And envious enemies tear him in two—
 Friends steal his life from him, I swear it's true!

Those unaware that spring is for rebirth
 Cannot perceive what time is really worth,
 Take refuge in God's grace and you will know
 That He pours kindness down on us below,
 Why seek another refuge from your plight? 1850
 For you both fire and water now will fight:
 Moses and Noah's refuge was the sea
 Which showed its anger to the enemy,
 And fire protected Abraham as well—
 Smoke rose from Nimrod's heart as if from hell;
 The mountain beckoned John the Baptist near,*
 Its rocks made his pursuers run in fear:
 It said, 'Come and escape now with your life,
 'You're safe in me from every sharpened knife.'

The parrot says farewell to the merchant and flies away

The parrot gave him words to contemplate 1855
Then said, 'Farewell, we now must separate.'
The merchant said, 'God be with you each day
Now that you've shown me a more worthy way!
He said then to himself, 'I've understood
To take the path of all the wise and good.
How can my soul be less than that mere bird's?
The soul must follow good ways, heed her words.'

The harm in being venerated by people and standing out

Your cage-like body is the spirit's thorn
Fed by deceit from those you come upon:
One says, 'I'll be your confidant my friend,' 1860
Another, 'I'm your partner till the end.'
The next, 'No one can ever take your place,
To match your beauty, virtue, and sheer grace.'
Another says, 'Both worlds belong to you,
And all our souls feed off your great soul too.'
When he sees people drunk with him, he'll lose
All self-control, for self-conceit he'll choose,
Not realizing thousands just like him
Satan threw in a stream where they can't swim:
The world gives flattery which men desire— 1865
Eat less, for it's a morsel full of fire!
It's fire's unseen, it's taste though you can tell
And then its smoke will rise as if from hell;
Don't say, 'I'll never be so gullible'—
Through your desire you're always vulnerable.
And should one mock you in the public's gaze,
Your heart will burn with shame for several days,
Although you know he speaks from disappointment
That his high hopes did not find their fulfilment;
Still its effect will linger inside you— 1870
The same applies when you hear praises too,

And this effect will slowly take its course
 To be your arrogance and error's source;
 To praise's faults, like sweets, we all stay blind,
 They're known through bitterness they leave behind,
 Just like a potion or a pill you take,
 Then suffer irritation for its sake:
 Eat sweets, then feel their taste soon disappear—
 Short-term effects can't last—this should be clear.
 But they still take effect, though far from view— 1875
 All things through opposites are shown to you:
 Sugar's effects persist far from your eyes
 To form boils nurses then have to excise!
 The self becomes like pharaoh with such praise,
 Be self-abased, don't choose that tyrant's ways!
 So strive to be like slaves and not like kings,
 Be struck like balls, don't be the bat which swings!
 Or else, when all your beauty fades from view
 Your sycophants will then grow tired of you;
 That group who falsely praised you will be found 1880
 Calling you 'devil' when you come around,
 On seeing you arrive such men will say:
 'A corpse has risen from the grave today!'
 Just like the beardless youth whom they call 'lord'*
 To trap him with deceit when they applaud,
 But when his beard grows with his infamy
 Vile demons will feel shame at what they see.
 The devil seeks a human he can curse,
 He doesn't come to you, for you're much worse!
 While you were human he would still come up 1885
 And offer you his evil drinking-cup,
 But now you're like a devil through and through,
 You good for nothing—Satan flees from you!
 The ones who used to hold on to your hem
 Flee from what you've become—you're worse than them!

Explanation of 'What God wills happens'

What we've said is a basis, not the end,
But for God's favours we're worth naught, my friend!
Without God's grace and that of his élite
Angels would earn a blotted record-sheet.
O God, whose grace fulfils our every need, 1890
Remembering someone else is a misdeed,
For so much guidance You've bestowed on us
It hides our flaws and utter wretchedness!
The drop of knowledge which You gave before
Unite now with your ocean, please, once more!
The drop of knowledge in my soul please free
From lust and from my body's tyranny,
Before the soil should soak it deep inside,
Before the wind should spray it far and wide,
Though if they snatch it You'd be capable 1895
To take it back, for it's redeemable:
The drop which spilled or vanished in the air
To flee Your power how could it thus dare?
Though it should enter deepest non-existence,
When You call, it will run back through the distance,
Opposites kill each other just like men,
But Your decree can make them live again,
From nothing to existence, Lord, You can
Each moment send another caravan.
Logic and thought each night, especially, 1900
Become annihilated in Your sea,
But new true beings once again at dawn
Raise up their heads like fish and are reborn.
Thousands of leaves are vanquished every fall
Into the sea of death, which conquers all,
And draped in black as though he mourns, the crow
Laments the garden's grass was forced to go,
The village-chief, however, will dictate
To non-existence : 'Give back what you ate:

Black death give up what you ate like an ass 1905
 Of plants, medicinal herbs, the leaves, and grass!
 Collect your thoughts now, stop meandering,
 Each breath, within, your fall's replaced by spring!
 Your own heart's garden is so fresh and green,
 There cypress, rose, and jasmine can be seen;
 The crowd of leaves now hides the branch from view,
 The scores of roses hide the palace too.

From Universal Intellect this came,
 As rose and hyacinth it smells the same:
 Without a rose can you detect rose scent? 1910
 When there's no wine can you see wine ferment?
 Scent is your leader and your perfect guide
 To heaven—it will lead you deep inside,
 Scent is a balm for eyes which gives them sight:
 Jacob's eyes opened, darkness turned to light;
 Bad smells can blind a person instantly,
 While Joseph's scent enables one to see—
 Since you're not Joseph, be like Jacob—cry!*
 Love's tumult will be seen then in your eye.
 Listen to this advice from Sana'i,* 1915
 Find freshness in your withered frame like me:
 'Your airs presume a face just like a rose,
 Since you don't have one, don't strike such a pose:
 A face that's plain turns ugly when it's vain—
 Even blind eyes should not endure such pain!
 In front of Joseph, don't assume such airs,
 Like Jacob sigh in need and say your prayers.

The parrot's dying showed her neediness—
 Now make yourself a corpse, feel even less,
 That Jesus's breath might serve as your cure 1920
 And make you like itself so blessed and pure.
 Don't claim in spring on stone some verdure grows,
 Be soft like soil to raise a lovely rose—

For years you've been a stony-hearted man,
Try being like the soil now if you can!

*The story of the old harpist who in Omar's reign would
play the harp in the middle of a graveyard without any
food just for the sake of God*

There was once in Omar's huge caliphate
A harpist whose sweet music was so great,
His voice made nightingales fall stunned and cry
While also making each joy multiply,
His breath graced meetings where the lords would throng, 1925
The Resurrection* listened to his song
Like Esrafil, whose voice was heard ahead
And brought back souls to bodies of the dead,
Or one of Esrafil's close friends, whose cry
Could make an elephant grow wings and fly!
For Esrafil revives men totally
Though they've been rotting for a century.
The Prophets too have special tunes inside
From which to seekers precious life's supplied,
The sensual ear can't hear such melodies 1930
Since it's been tainted by iniquities;
A man can't hear the angels' tunes inside,
Their inner secrets humans are denied,
These tunes are from this world of time and death,
The heart's tune's loftier than every breath,
Angels and men are captives equally
In ignorance's gaol without a key:
Recite: '*Community of jinn and men*'
And learn: '*If you can pass beyond, go then!*'*
Within the saints are soulful melodies 1935
Which sing '*There is one God*', so listen please!
Lift up your heads from 'not'* which means negation
And cast off fancies and imagination—
You've rotted in this planet of decay,
Your soul could not grow up and fly away!

If I give just a hint about this song,
 Men's souls would rise from tombs before too long—
 Bring your ear close, for this tune isn't hidden,
 Though to relate it now I am forbidden:

The saints take Esrafil's place from today, 1940

They give life to the dead and show the way;
 From corpses souls ascend without a choice

Up from the body's tomb due to this voice,
 Saying, 'This voice has a distinctive tone,

To grant life is the job of God alone;
 We'd died and been left there to decompose,
 Then came God's blast* and everybody rose.'

Whether God's blast is open or concealed,

It gives that which in Mary was revealed*—
 You who beneath your skin have lost it all 1945

Return from non-existence at His call!
 This call comes from the King Himself, it's true,
 Although His servant utters it to you.

God told him, 'I'm your tongue and eye, my slave,

Your wrath and your contentment too I gave,
 Go forth, because *through me you hear and see*.'

Though you're God's secret, don't claim mastery,
 Since to *Him who is for the Lord* you turn,

I'm yours, for '*God's for him*',* as we all learn;
 Sometimes I say 'It's you', sometimes 'It's me'; 1950

Regardless, I am sunlight, can't you see?

When I emit a breath just like a ray,

The problems of the world all fade away;

That darkness which resists all solar light

My breath makes like the morning, clear and bright!

The names to Adam God himself explained,

This knowledge all the rest through Adam gained;

Whether in Adam's light or God's you bask,

You choose between the goblet and the flask,

For with the flask the goblet has a link 1955
 So potent, blessed be that fine goblet's drink!
 The Prophet said, '*Those who've seen me are best,*
But people who've seen them are just as blest.'
 When lamps reflect a candle, men of course
 See it as well and know what is the source,
 A hundred times like this though it is passed
 The source stays linked to those who see it last—
 Either be nourished by the final flame
 Or the soul's candle, for they're all the same,
 Either receive light from contemporaries 1960
 Or from the candles of past visionaries.

*In explanation of the hadith: 'Your Lord sends in the days of your
 era special breaths, so make sure to receive them!'*

The Prophet said, 'The breaths that God exhales
 In our own present time that's what prevails,
 So always be attentive with your ears
 To catch a breath before it disappears.'
 A breath came, saw you, slowly travelled on,
 Gave life to whom it wanted, then was gone,
 Another breath will come soon, be prepared
 So you don't miss this other one He's spared;
 The mother of all fires this breath extinguished, 1965
 A dead man inner motion thus distinguished:
 The flame's heart felt the loss of its existence,
 The dead then wore new garments of subsistence,
 Like movements of the Prophet's heavenly tree,*
 Not like those of this world's menagerie;
 If it should fall upon the earth and sky
 Then it would terrify all passers by,
 From fear of breath like this that's infinite—
 Recite: '*But they refused to shoulder it!*'
 Why should '*they shrank from it*'* be mentioned here 1970
 Unless the mountain turns to blood through fear?
 Last night I found You in a different hue,
 But then some morsels blocked the path to You,

For just a bite Loqman is held at bay,*
 It's now Loqman's time—morsel go away!
 The morsel's what these pricks are set upon:
 In Loqman's sole they're looking for a thorn—
 There's none at all, nor semblance of one, there:
 Your greed stops you discerning things with care!
 The thorn's what you mistook to be a date 1975
 Because you're blind with lust, you low ingrate!
 God's rosary is in Loqman's pure soul,
 How can a thorn have pierced this sage's sole?
 This thorn-consuming realm's a dromedary
 That's ridden by Mohammad's progeny—
 Camel, you're bearing roses, you should know
 That from their scent more roses soon will grow!
 But you prefer to head for thorns and sand—
 What roses will you find on barren land?
 You who in search have travelled here and there 1980
 For roses, why do you keep asking 'where?'
 From your own foot until you first remove
 The thorn, you're in the dark and you can't move.

A man so great the world can't hold his size
 A thorn's tip still can blinker from our eyes.
 The Prophet came to bring us harmony:
 '*Please speak, sweet redhead,* come and speak to me,*
 And throw a horseshoe in the fire as well*'
 So mountains turn to rubies by its spell!'
 The redhead's feminine, it's Aisha's name, 1985
 Arabs make 'soul' in gender just the same,
 It makes no difference if it's feminine:
 The soul is genderless, alone within,
 It's too sublime for either gender's hold
 For it's not something which blows hot and cold;
 The soul does not grow large by eating bread,
 Nor turn like this and then like that instead,
 Since it's pure goodness, it does what is good.
 Without it there's no goodness—understood?

If it's through sugar that you taste sweet too, 1990
 Remember sugar may abandon you,
 But when you turn to sugar through your state
 Then how can sugar ever separate!
 When lovers find within themselves the wine
 They lose their intellect, dear friend of mine;
 This intellect denies love, but would claim
 It's privy to love's secrets all the same—
 It's just a know-all, fighting self-negation,
 Angels are devils till annihilation,
 It seems a friend by what it does and says 1995
 But it is far apart from mystic ways—
 It's nothing, for it won't leave self-existence,
 Unwilling, it's dissolved by our insistence.
 The soul is perfect and so is its call,
 Mohammad said, '*Belal, refresh us all!*
 Lift up for us your powerful voice once more
 With breath I breathed inside your big heart's core,
 That breath which once left Adam so amazed,
 Made heaven's fold feel mesmerized and dazed!'"*
 Mohammad lost himself in that fine voice, 2000
 His prayer was not performed then by God's choice:
 He didn't lift his head, asleep he lay,
 His dawn prayer thus was subject to delay,*
 But with the Bride alone that previous night
 His soul kissed both her hands and saw Her Light:
 Love and the soul are veiled in the unseen,
 Because I called Him 'Bride' don't scream 'obscene!'
 I broke my silence not to be a bore—
 Would that He'd given me a little more!
 He says, 'Speak up, it's not objectionable! 2005
 Fate thus decreed in the Invisible.'*
 Fault lies with those who only see what's wrong,
 With such as these, pure spirit can't belong:
 Fault lies with creatures who are ignorant
 And have no link to the Omnipotent;
 For God though unbelief is wisdom too,
 It's just a curse if held by me or you,

For if impurities are mixed with gold
 It's like the candy's stick you have to hold:
 They're both weighed on the scales as if one whole, 2010
 Together like the body and the soul.
 The greats did not speak idly, they were sure
 'For pure-souled men, their body's just as pure.'
 Their speech, their soul, their body, and their face
 Are absolute, pure soul that leaves no trace,
 The soul's mere body if it thinks them foes,
 Worth naught, like backgammon dice overthrows;
 That one returns to soil and turns to earth,
 While others in white salt find pure rebirth;
 Salt made Mohammad the most excellent, 2015
 Than that well-formed *hadith* more eloquent: *
 This salt's his permanent inheritance,
 His heirs are with you—seek them out at once!
 One sits before you—which way do you face?
 Where is the soul that contemplates each trace?
 If you imagine you've a front and back,
 Your body's trapped you, soul inside you lack—
 Bodies have fronts and sides in all directions
 But the enlightened soul has no dimensions.
 Open your eyes to vision through His light, 2020
 Avoid the search that's the short-sighted's plight!
 You're trapped in joy and grief, completely blind—
 In non-existence where's front and behind?
 Today it's raining, walk until it's night,
 It's special rain God sends to those with sight.

The story of Aisha's asking the Prophet: 'It rained today when you went to the graveyard, so how is it that your clothes aren't wet?'

The Prophet visited a grave one day
 Because one of his friends had passed away,
 With handfuls of dry earth he filled the grave,
 Thus to a precious seed new life he gave.
 Just like interred men, plants we see around 2025
 All lift their outstretched hands up from the ground,

To humans they give countless signs, so clear,
They speak to those of us with ears to hear,
With outstretched hands, or like a tongue that's green
They share earth's secrets which lie deep, unseen;
Like birds with heads in water that soon rose
As peacocks, though they used to be mere crows:
In winter He had locked those crows in gaol,
But now He's given them a gorgeous tail;
In winter He grants death, and each one grieves, 2030
But then revives them in the spring with leaves.
'They live on by themselves,' deniers said,
'Why then attribute this to God instead?'
Despite their blindness, in His friends who know
God's planted orchards which will always grow,
Every sweet-smelling rose that you should see
Reveals God's mysteries so openly,
Despite the sceptics' claims, we smell their scent
Across the world wherever veils are rent.
Like bugs on roses, sceptics clamber off— 2035
Their ears can't bear Truth's drums, so they just scoff;
They act like they're immersed in what we say
But when the lightning flashes, turn away—
They've turned their eyes away from what's shown here:
The eye seeks safety first when ruled by fear.

To his wife Aisha then Mohammad turned
On coming home, to share what he had learned,
But when she saw his face she felt surprise
And touched him, just in case it was her eyes:
His turban, face, and hair she touched and felt, 2040
His collar and his sleeve she also smelt.
The Prophet asked, 'What do you seek this way?'
She said, 'I saw the rain pour down today;
I've checked your clothes in case they're wet just now,
But there's no trace of rain—I'm wondering how!'
He asked, 'What's that you're wearing on your head?'
'I made that scarf of yours a veil instead.'

He said, 'This then is why the Lord made plain
 To your pure eyes the special, hidden rain:
 That rain did not come from those clouds, my love, 2045
 Other clouds float in different skies above.'

*Commentary on the verse of Hakim Sana'i:**
Other skies found beyond, up with the soul,
Command our own skies in their earthly role,
And ups and downs obstruct the spirit's way
Like mountains and deep seas to cross each day.

Some other clouds and rain far from your view
 Exist in the unseen, and more suns too,
 Just His élite see this manifestation,
 The rest *feel doubt as to a new creation.**
 Rain nurtures with its fresh, reviving spray,
 But also causes ruin and decay:
 The rain in spring is great, it makes things grow,
 Autumnal rain is like a fever though:
 The former nurtures tenderly like breath, 2050
 The latter makes things sick and pale as death;
 The wind and sun are just like this as well—
 Find the point of their differences, then tell!
 In the unseen too there's variety
 While here there's barter, fraud, and usury!
 From that spring comes each breath the saints emit,
 Inside one's heart a garden grows from it,
 Spring rain's effect, enabling trees to live,
 Is found too in the grace their breath can give.
 If there's a tree that looks as dry as sand, 2055
 Don't blame the wind which helps each soul expand:
 The wind first did its work, then moved ahead,
 Those who had souls chose by it to be led.

Concerning the meaning of the hadith: 'Take advantage of the coolness of the spring'

The Prophet told his friends once, 'Please beware,
Don't cover up yourself against spring air,
Because your soul will gain from that pure breeze
Which does to it what spring does to the trees,
But you must flee autumnal cold instead
For it will leave you like these gardens—dead!' 2060
Transmitters brought us just the form outside
And simply with that they were satisfied,
So unaware that there's a soul to win—
They saw the mountain, not the mine within.
For God, the carnal soul's lust is autumnal,
Wisdom and heart spring's essence, thus eternal;
Your clever reasoning hides like a cheat,
Seek one whose intellect's divine, complete;
Through his, your intellect may end up whole,
That intellect restrains your carnal soul.
Here's the interpretation put in brief: 2065
Pure breaths, like spring, breathe life in every leaf.
Don't close your ears to what the saints report,
Soft words or harsh, for they're your faith's support,
Embrace with joy warm words and cold as well
Till you escape from fickleness and hell—
They're both life's spring, the source of all that's good,
Knowledge, sincerity, and servanthood,
Because the spirit's garden lives through Him
The heart's sea's filled with pearls up to the brim;
A wise man's heart is filled with endless grief 2070
If his heart's garden misses just one leaf.

Aisha asks the Prophet, 'What was the inner meaning of today's rain?'

Aisha then asked, 'Dear Prophet, please convey
To me the wisdom of the rain today:

Was this the cleansing rain of clemency
 Or wrathful justice from divinity,
 A gift of kindness from the pure spring breeze,
 Or one of harmful autumn's qualities?'
 He said, 'This was to heal the misery
 Which has afflicted Adam's progeny:
 If Man were to remain inside that fire
 The rate of loss and ruin would soar higher,
 The world would be destroyed at once no doubt,
 Cupidity in men thus driven out.'
 The pillar of this world is heedlessness,
 This world sees as a curse pure thoughtfulness:
 It comes from that realm, when it dominates
 This world is brought low by what it dictates;
 This wisdom's sunshine, greed is icy cold,
 Wisdom's fresh water, this world's foul and old,
 From that world gentle sprinklings always pour
 So lust and envy here shall live no more,
 If such rains that are hidden should increase
 Both vice and virtue in this world would cease.
 This topic has no limit, let's return
 The outcome of the harpist's tale to learn:

2075

2080

*The remainder of the story of the old harpist and
 the explanation of it*

That man through whom the world was filled with sound,
 From whose voice grew such visions that astound,
 So bird-like hearts would fly in ecstasy
 While souls, perplexed, would lose stability,
 As time passed, aged—his falcon soul grown weak,
 More like a finch that scrapes dirt with its beak,
 His back became as hunched as jugs of wine,
 His eyebrows hung down like a trailing vine,
 His lovely, soul-expanding voice had turned
 Into an ugly, worthless noise men shunned:
 What once made Venus green with jealousy
 Resembled now a mule's bray tragically!

2085

Has any fine thing not turned foul before?
 Has any rooftop not become a floor?
 Only the voices of saints from the past 2090
 Whose breath provides the Last Day's trumpet blast,*
 A soul which makes our hearts drunk in an instant,
 A non-existent which makes us existent,
 The loveliness in every voice and thought,
 The joy which inner revelation brought.
 When he grew old and weak that man looked dead,
 He needed loans just for a loaf of bread:
 'You've granted me long life, Lord, whom I serve,
 And countless blessings which I don't deserve,
 For seventy years although I sinned each day 2095
 You never would withhold grace from my way,
 Without means I'm your guest, so hear my song:
 I play for God's sake, to whom I belong.'
 He picked his harp up, sought God on his own,
 Crying inside the graveyard all alone:
 'I seek from God the cost of just one string,
 He'll kindly take the counterfeits I bring!'
 When he had played a long time and thus wept,
 With harp as pillow, grave as bed, he slept;
 His spirit fled the prison of his breast, 2100
 Abandoning the harp now for its quest:
 Free from the body and this world of pain
 Into the simple world, the soul's domain;
 His soul sang of what he'd now come upon:
 'If I could only stay here from now on!
 I'd love to stay in vernal realms instead,
 Inside this mystic plain and tulip bed—
 I'd crawl there now without a head or feet,
 Without a lip or teeth its sweets I'd eat,
 With thoughts free of affliction from the brain 2105
 I'd joke with those up there in heaven's plain,
 Up there, with eyes closed, a whole world I'd view,
 Without a hand I'd pick some roses too;
 Like birds which in a sea of honey sink,
 Job's fount *which cleanses* and serves as a *drink*:*

It cleansed Job from his head down to his toes,
 Like dawn's first light, from all his earthly woes.'
 If this book matched the sky's expansiveness
 It still could not contain a drop of this!
 The earth and sky's vast space has sliced my heart 2110
 With feelings of confinement, locked apart;
 That dream world which I've seen with my own eye,
 Through its expansiveness spurs me to fly—
 If that world and its gate were manifest
 Then few would stay here for a moment's rest.

Then the command came: 'Don't be greedy—no!
 Now that the thorn's come out, step forward—go!'
 The harpist's spirit lingered, reticent,
 Clung tightly to the Most Beneficent.

While he was asleep a voice told Omar: 'Give this much gold from the treasury to that man who is sleeping in the graveyard'

Omar was then made drowsy for God's sake 2115
 Until he could no longer stay awake,
 He felt amazed, and said, 'This is no game—
 It comes from the unseen, it serves an aim.'
 He lay down, slept and had a dream so clear
 That God's own voice Omar's soul then could hear;
 That voice is the sole source of every sound,
 All noise is just its echo going round,
 Each Nubian, Persian, Arab, Turk, and Kurd
 Without their ears this wondrous voice has heard—
 So what if Turks and Tajiks understood— 2120
 That voice is heard as well by stone and wood!
 Each moment '*Am I not your lord?*'* we hear
 And essences and accidents appear,
 Though all don't cry out '*Yes!*' still their emergence
 Is like a '*Yes!*' sprung forth from non-existence.
 I said that stone and wood can understand,
 This tale will illustrate this, and expand:

The complaint of the moaning pillar when a pulpit was made for the Prophet because the congregation had grown and they had said, 'We can't see your blest face when you're preaching.' The Prophet and his companions hear the pillar's complaint, and the Prophet converses with it plainly

A pillar, cut off from the Prophet, moaned,
 Just like a living being, and it groaned;
 He asked it, 'What are you reacting to?' 2125
 'My soul bleeds now that it's cut off from you:
 I was your firm support, but you've moved on—
 Do pulpits have a post to lean upon?'
 'Do you want to be made a palm instead,
 So everyone can pick your dates?' he said,
 'Or that God should make you a cypress tree,
 So you'll stay fresh and moist eternally?'
 The pillar said, 'I want what lasts forever'—
 Don't you behave worse than this piece of timber!
 He buried then that pillar so it may 2130
 Be resurrected on the Final Day.

Those men whom God has called, as you should know,
 Involvement with this world choose to forgo:
 Whoever gets work straight from God will find
 Admission there, and leave his job behind,
 But those who've not had gifts from realms unknown
 Will not believe inanimates can moan:
 He says, 'Yes!' though inside he scoffs at it,
 So you won't say that he's a hypocrite;
 Unless informed about His order, 'Be!'
2135
 They would reject my discourse totally;
 A thousand men who just obey what's told
 Were filled with doubt when one new thought took hold,
 Their skills in logic, proofs, and imitation
 Are based upon their false imagination.

That wretched Satan sows doubt in each mind,
 In order to trip up the ones who're blind;
 The legs of theorists are made of wood;
 A wooden leg's unstable, it's no good.

The Pole of each age* is a visionary— 2140

Mountains feel dizzy at his constancy,
 While blind men need a stick to walk around,
 To stop them tumbling over on the ground,
 That horseman through whom armies won their fight—
 Who is this man? The one who has true sight;
 Though with a stick the blind can walk with ease,
 Seeing through help received from visionaries,
 If there were no kings of the mystic kind,
 As stiff as corpses you would see the blind:

Sowing and reaping blind men cannot do, 2145

Nor trade, nor building, as is plain to you.
 If He had not shown mercy to your heart
 Your staff of reason would have split apart—
 What is this staff? Proofs and analogies.

Who gave it? That Most Glorious One who sees;
 The staff's become a weapon for your hate,
 So break it into bits, you blind ingrate!
 He gave this staff that you might benefit,
 In anger has He struck you once with it?

Blind people, what's kept you preoccupied? 2150

Look for an intermediary, a guide!
 Don't disobey! He gave the staff to you!

Remember just what Adam was put through!
 The miracles of Moses and Mohammad*:

A stick became a snake, a pillar muttered,
 The pillar moaned, the stick turned to a snake:
 They strike five times a day* for their faith's sake.

But if this truth were comprehensible

We wouldn't need a single miracle— 2155
 That which is grasped by your intelligence

Does not need miracles as evidence.

Consider this path—it's irrational,
 And yet to wise men it's acceptable,
 While demons, fearing Adam, chose to flee
 To far off islands, filled with jealousy:
 Likewise when prophets' miracles appear
 The sceptics hide their heads in sand through fear
 So they can act like Muslims in deceit,
 Without you knowing that they only cheat;
 They rub on silver, fake insignias 2160
 To make seem real their worthless replicas,
 They falsely speak of laws, God's unity
 Like loaves which hide within impurity.
 Philosophers don't dare to breathe a word
 Because true faith will show them they're absurd:
 Their hands and feet do what their spirits say,
 Since they're inanimate and must obey—
 Although they spread doubts and they falsify,
 Against them their own limbs still testify.

*The manifestation of a miracle of the Prophet through the
 speech of gravel in the hand of Abu Jahl, as it bears witness
 to the truth of Mohammad's status*

While holding gravel Abu Jahl came near 2165
 To ask the Prophet, 'What do I have here?
 If you're a prophet, tell me what I've brought,
 Since heaven's secrets you must have been taught.'
 'Would you prefer it if I answer you
 Or if the stones speak up to tell what's true?'
 He said, 'The latter's more incredible.'
 'Of course, though of much more God's capable.'
 Within his fist each stone began to say
 That it had Muslim faith: without delay
 Each said, '*There is no God except Allah,*' 2170
 And joined, '*Mohammad is His Messenger.*'
 On hearing this, he threw them on the floor,
 Much angrier than he had been before.

The remainder of the story about the musician: the Commander of the Faithful Omar conveys to him the message that the unseen voice had uttered

Let's go back to that old musician's tale:

With waiting he became so weak and pale,
Omar was then told: 'Free him from his need,
He's been our servant in both word and deed,
He's a much-valued slave for whom we care—

You'll find him in the graveyard deep in prayer;
Arise, and from the public treasury

2175

Take seven hundred dinars rightfully,
Tell him: "God's chosen you among us all,
Take this amount, forgive me that it's small;
It's for those silk harp strings we know you lack—
Once it is spent, if you want more, come back." '

That awesome voice thus shook Omar awake

To then exert himself just for God's sake—
Towards the graveyard quickly now he ran,
Clutching his purse and searching for that man.

He ran around it for a while, but found

2180

Apart from some old codger none around;
'This can't be him,' he thought, and searched again.

He tired and still had not seen other men;
He thought, 'God said: "A slave, immaculate,
A pure man, worthy, blest and fortunate"—

Can some old harpist be this venerable?

Mysterious secret, you're incredible!

He went around the graveyard once again

Just like a lion prowling round his den,
When he knew there was no one else in sight,

2185

He thought, 'In darkness hearts can still burn bright!'

He sat down next to him with utmost care,

But then he sneezed—the man jumped in the air!

He saw Omar—confused, he scratched his head;

He felt like leaving, but just shook instead.

‘God help me please!’ the old man prayed inside,
‘It’s the police for me, and I can’t hide!’
Omar glanced at his face and it was clear
The old man was ashamed and pale with fear.
He told him, ‘Don’t be scared, don’t run away, 2190
I’ve brought good news from God for you today:
God praised your nature, so that I, Omar,
Came to admire and love you from afar—
So sit back down beside me, and stay near
So I can whisper secrets in your ear:
God sends his greetings, and He asks you this:
“How are you with your pain that’s limitless?”
Here’s cash—first buy your silk harp strings, and then
Once you have spent it all come back again.’
The old man shook on hearing what was planned, 2195
His heart throbbed wildly and he bit his hand,
He screamed, ‘My Peerless Lord who’s free from blame,
Please stop! You make this old man burn with shame!’
Due to abundant pain he wept in fits,
Then slammed his harp down, smashing it to bits:
‘You veiled me from my Lord, you stupid thing,
And chased me off the highway to the King!
You sucked my blood to make me a disgrace
For my whole life before God’s perfect grace!
Have mercy, God, supreme in loyalty, 2200
Upon a life spent in iniquity:
The value of each day God’s given you
Exceeds all things, but no man has a clue—
Throughout my life I was a waste of space,
I spent my days with treble notes and bass!
Immersed forever in my fickle art
I thus forgot the pain of being apart,
The freshness in my minor keys instead
Has shrivelled up my heart and left it dead!
Due to my hours spent on each melody 2205
The caravan moved on too soon for me.
Against my self, please God, come to my aid:
Of no one else complaints have I now made;

I can't receive such help from any source
 But God, who's closer than my self, of course—
 My being comes each breath from Him to me—
 Once this declines, I'll see His Unity,
 Like when near someone counting out your gold—
 Your whole attention soon this man will hold.'

*Omar turns the old man's gaze from the station of weeping, which
 requires self-existence, to the station of absorption*

Omar then told him, 'Your acute distress 2210
 Points also to your own self-consciousness,
 Annihilation has a difference—
 Self-consciousness is there a gross offence:
 It's thinking of the past to no avail,
 From God the past and future both will veil—
 Set fire to these two now, and please take heed,
 Don't stay blocked up with knots like a bad reed;
 While it's blocked up it can't be intimate,
 No lips count it as an associate.
 While walking, all your thoughts are wandering, 2215
 Back home about yourself you're pondering:
 You've knowledge, but you're heedless of its source—
 It's worse than sin, your kind of blind remorse!
 Why still repent about a state that's passed?
 Repent of your repentance now at last!
 You thought then just of music in your ears,
 Now you prefer to weep your salty tears!
 Omar, discerning mirror of God's light,
 Woke up the old man's soul from its dark night:
 He stopped his weeping and his laughing too, 2220
 His old soul died, but he was born anew;
 Then he was filled with such bewilderment
 He rose beyond the earth and firmament:
 A search beyond all searches thus began,
 Not that I understand—perhaps you can?
 Such states and words beyond what's known to us,
 Drowned in the beauty of the Glorious,

A drowning, neither meaning his deliverance,
Nor that the Sea and he still show a difference:
Your intellect can't know the Whole unless 2225
You keep on pleading and show neediness—
When such demands are made repeatedly
At last a wave will come from that Pure Sea.

Now that we've reached the ending of this tale,
The old man and his states have drawn the veil;
He's shaken words off just like crumbs of bread
Though half of this long tale is left unsaid.
For such delights, to gamble is the cost,
A hundred thousand souls may thus be lost—
Be like a hunting falcon in your soul, 2230
Risk your life like the sun—let the dice roll!
The sun which radiates life to all men
Each moment empties, then fills up again,
Sun of Reality, diffuse life too!
Make this old world shine bright as though it's new!
Spirit and life arrive here from beyond,
Like water pouring non-stop in a pond.

*Commentary on the prayer of those two angels who
call out at every market each day: 'God, give every
spender change to spare and bring every miser harm!'
with the explanation that the 'spender' refers to the
aspirant on the path to God, not the one who
squanders it for the sake of desire*

The Prophet said, "Two angels always shout
With voices that sound sweet when they cry out:
"Please God, keep all the spenders satisfied, 2235
Let them go home with their wealth multiplied,
But don't give misers anything, please Lord,
But loss of income, so they'll lose their horde!"

Yet stinginess excels a generous hand—

Don't give what's God's except at His command!

Then, in return, you'll gain a boundless treasure

And not an unbeliever's paltry measure—

Seek God's command from those in union's sea,

Not every heart has this capacity.

In the Koran those who chose to forget

2240

Found all their spending only buys regret:

The Meccans who reviled the Prophet* tried

A sacrifice to draw God to their side,

Such camel sacrifices thus they made

To sharpen on his neck a murderous blade,

But they were like that overgenerous slave:

The king's wealth to his enemies he gave!

So to the king this kind of generous act

Warranted exile—this slave was attacked!

That's why believers fearfully recite:

2245

'Show us the straight path!' in their prayers each night.

The generous give coins to all those who ask,

But offering up one's soul's the lover's task!

Give bread for God's sake, more will come to you,

Give up your soul, receive a soul that's new:

When leaves fall off the tree, then God will give

The leafless tree what it should need to live;

Your being generous won't leave you without,

God's grace won't leave you ruined—never doubt!

Your barn is emptied when you sow what's there

2250

But soon your field sprouts goodness everywhere;

What you save in your barn as capital

Gets eaten up by mice, it's temporal.

This world is naught, look for the lasting whole,

Your body's void, try searching in your soul!

So bring your bitter soul now to the sword,

A soul just like the sea is the reward,

If you don't know how to find this location

Just listen to the following narration:

The story of the caliph who surpassed Hatem Ta'i in
generosity for his own time, and was peerless then*

There was a caliph once in history 2255
Who seemed superior to Hatem Ta'i,
The flag of generosity he'd raise,
Eradicating need through his kind ways,
His generous deeds produced pearls in the sea
And stretched around the world repeatedly,
He was like clouds or rainfall for dry land,
Thus representing God's own giving hand;
His gifts made deepest mines and oceans quake,
The route to him all caravans would take.
The needy turned towards his door in prayer, 2260
News of his generous ways spread everywhere:
Persians, Greeks, Arabs, Turks, with eyebrows raised,
By his munificence were left amazed—
Water of Life*, and sea of kindness too,
Through him all humans were soon born anew.

*Story about the poor bedouin and his wife's altercation
with him because of their want and poverty*

A bedouin lived with his weary bride;
Since they were hard up, every day she cried:
'We always have to suffer and be poor,
The rest rejoice, while you and I endure:
We have no bread, just jealousy and pain, 2265
We have no water—tears replaced the rain;
Just sunlight clothes us in the afternoon,
At night our sheets are beams shone by the moon—
Imagining the moon's a wholesome pie
We lift our hands to grab it from the sky!
Paupers, ashamed at our sad poverty,
Just watch us starve, filled with anxiety;

Our kin as well as strangers keep away
 Like Sameri* when not allowed to stay:
 If I ask for some beans to fill my cup 2270
 They shout, 'May you die painfully—shut up!
 In war and charity is Arab pride,
 Among them you're a blemish that must hide!
 Fighting? We don't need that to have no life,
 Beheaded thus by poverty's cruel knife!
 Charity? We must beg for our food first!
 We suck the blood of flies to slake our thirst!
 And if a guest should ever come our way,
 While he's asleep I'd take his coat away!'

*The deception of needy disciples by false claimants whom they
 imagine to be venerable authorities who are in union with
 God, not knowing the difference between fact and fiction, between
 what grows naturally and what has been grafted*

Because of this the wise have understood 2275
 'One must become the guest of someone good':
 You're the disciple of a person who
 Through meanness will steal all your gains from you—
 How can he help you when he has no power?
 He gives no light—you'll darken by the hour!
 Since he has no light, how can people say
 By seeing him they'll gain a single ray!
 Just like a half-blind doctor treating eyes
 He pulls wool over them—this man just lies!
 'In poverty and wealth we are this way, 2280
 May no guest by us two be led astray!
 If you've not seen a famine's face before
 Look at us bedouins now at your door!
 Each false guide hides our features inwardly:
 His heart is dark though he talks cleverly.'
 Of God he doesn't have a single trace
 But claims more grace than Adam to your face,
 The devil won't show him a single hair,
 'I'm greater than the saints,' he'll still declare,

He's stolen terms from Sufis for his speech 2285
So men might think he's qualified to teach,
To Bayazid he even deals out blame,
His inner being makes Yazid* feel shame—
Without a crumb from heaven, he's alone,
God hasn't even thrown to him a bone.
He's said, 'I've spread a feast, come everyone,
For I'm God's deputy, the caliph's son;
Hey simple-hearted people everywhere,
Come fill your stomachs here with my hot air!
Some waited years for promises he made, 2290
Tomorrow never comes, and dreams must fade.

It takes a while until one's inner soul
Becomes revealed to others as a whole:
Is there some gold beneath the body's wall
Or just a snake-pit where foul insects crawl?
Once it is known that this man was depraved,
His students will be too old to be saved.

In explanation of how it happens occasionally that a disciple sincerely believes that a false claimant is authentic, and, through this conviction of his, reaches a station that his shaikh has never even dreamt of, such that fire and water cannot harm him though they do harm his shaikh. But this is very rare

Occasionally, we see the opposite:
From falsehood some disciples benefit;
With a sincere aim they may reach their goal 2295
Though a mere body they had thought a soul.
Guessing the qebla* in the dead of night,
God heard their prayers though they did not guess right.

'This vain impostor lacks a soul within
Just as we both lack food and are so thin—

Why should we hide our want like this big fake,
And merely for our reputation's sake!'

The bedouin tells his wife to be patient and explains the virtue of poverty and patience

"Why keep on seeking wealth?" her husband said,
 "Most of our life has passed—we'll soon be dead!
 The wise don't think of gain and loss like you
 For both are like a flood that passes through—
 Whether it's clean or foul, don't waste a breath,
 Within a moment it will meet its death.
 Thousands of animals live wild and free
 Without such ups and downs, so joyfully:
 The dove gives thanks to God from that tall tree
 Although for food there's still no guarantee,
 The nightingale sings praise of God as well:
 "We count on you, and you respond so well!"
 The falcon finds her bliss on the king's hand,
 Forgetting all the carrion in the sand;
 From gnats to elephants the same applies:
 They're all God's family, whom He supplies.
 The grief inside our breasts is worthless nonsense,
 Mere fog and dust of our wind-like existence,
 Uprooting griefs are scythes which wickedly
 Keep whispering, "It's like this, can't you see?"
 Each suffering is a piece of death no doubt—
 If you know how to, cast that portion out!
 Since you can't flee that part of death, heed well:
 All of it will be poured on you in hell!
 But if this part of death tastes sweet to you
 God will make all the rest of it sweet too.
 Pains are like messengers from death—don't shun
 Death's messenger, you weak, distracted one!
 Those who live now in pleasure die in pain,
 The body's worshippers no soul will gain:
 From pastures sheep are driven to their pen,
 The fattest ones are picked for slaughter then.

The night has passed and dawn has come, dear wife, 2315
Will you just talk of gold for all your life?
When you were young you were more satisfied,
Now you seek gold, then you were gold inside,
A fruitful vine once, now you can't be sold,
Your fruit should ripen, but you're dry and old,
Your fruit ought to be sweeter now than that,
But you've reversed the way rope-makers plait,*
Since you're my wife we should be similar,
To make our life together easier :
Partners must match, in basics they must share, 2320
Like gloves and shoes, together as a pair;
If one shoe of a pair does not quite fit
The other must be thrown away with it,
Have you seen double-doors of different size,
A wolf and lion mate before your eyes?
Two loads won't balance on the camel's back
If one's much smaller than the other sack.
Contentment is the aim of my brave soul—
Why do you make repulsiveness your goal?'
The man spoke with sincerity this way 2325
To his old wife until the break of day.

*The wife advises her husband, 'Don't talk any more about your own merit and spiritual station. "Why preach what you don't practise", for even though these words are true, still you haven't reached the station of trust in God, and to speak like this above your own station and affairs is harmful and "more abhorred by God" '**

His wife screamed, 'Image is what you adore,
I won't endure your stories any more!
Don't spout pretentious gibberish to me,
Don't speak with arrogance presumptuously!
You have such airs as if you've earned much fame—
Look at your own state now and feel some shame!
Pride's ugly and for beggars doubly so,
Like wearing wet clothes when it's bound to snow!

Although you like to show off with hot air 2330
Your home's a spider's web—it's hardly there!
When did you fill your soul with satisfaction?
You've only just looked up its definition!
Although the Prophet said "Contentment's treasure",
You can't tell it from pain though it brings pleasure!
Contentment is the spirit's treasure-chest,
But only grief is found inside your breast!
Don't call me "wife" or try to cuddle me,
My husband's justice, not depravity!
How can you walk with lords when you eat mud 2335
And, for your drink, you suck a locust's blood!
You fight with dogs for bones, you're so in need,
And mourn just like an empty-bellied reed!
Don't look at me with eyes full of disdain
Or I'll tell what you hide inside each vein!
You think you're more intelligent than me,
You've credited me with stupidity;
Don't jump on me like reckless wolves would do—
Better to lack a brain than be like you!
Because your brain just shackles everyone 2340
It seems more like a snake or scorpion!
May God oppose your lies and cruelty
And stop your meddling brain from touching me!
Both snake and charmer lurk behind your face,
You're both amazingly—you're a disgrace!
If you could see you're ugly like the crow
From pain and grief you'd melt just like the snow!
The charmer chants spells like an enemy,
The snake casts spells back though he cannot see,
If his trap for the snake were not a spell, 2345
How could he be the snake's prey then as well?
The charmer, counting all the wealth he'd make
Can't recognize the spell from his own snake;
The snake says, "Charmer, you think you're so fine—
You see your own spell, but now look at mine!
You tricked me with the name of God for fun
To make me seem possessed to everyone—

I wasn't trapped by your tricks but God's name,
You've made God's name a trap, you should feel shame!"
The name of God will make you pay for it, 2350
To His name soul and body I commit,
For it will slit the veins of your sad life
Or throw you into gaol like me, your wife!
The wife gave lectures to him of this sort
Just like a never-ending bad report.

*The man advises his wife, 'Don't look upon the poor with contempt,
but look at the work of God as perfect. Don't revile the poor with
their poverty through your own vain fancy and opinion'*

He said, 'Are you a wife? You always moan!
*Poverty's pride**, so leave my ears alone!
Wealth is just like a hat that people wear
To warm their heads if they have lost their hair;
But those with lovely, glossy curls prefer 2355
Not to wear hats—without they're happier.'
The man of God is like the eye, and sight
Is better than to be veiled from God's light:
The dealer at the time of the inspection
Strips slaves of clothes that might hide imperfection,
But he can't strip them of their blemishes—
He'll clothe them so that no one witnesses,
Claiming, 'This one's just shy through modesty;
If I undress him, he is bound to flee!'
Up to his neck the dealer's filled with vice, 2360
To cover this, his money pays the price—
The slaves of lust can't see his faults within
For lust unites hearts which are filled with sin,
But if a beggar utters words of gold
His wares still won't be put in shops and sold.
The Sufi's business is beyond your brain,
Don't treat their poverty with such disdain
For they transcend mere outward poverty,
Their daily bread comes from God's majesty.

Since God is just, how can He then mistreat 2365
 Lovers whose hearts for Him alone still beat,
 Or give some people all that they desire
 While ushering the rest straight to the fire?
 So may His fire burn those who hold that view
 For He created earth and heaven too!
 Was *poverty's my pride** then said in vain?
 No, there are hidden glories to attain;
 'In anger, you have sworn at me a lot,
 "Snake-charmer" you have called me, though I'm not:
 If I catch one, first I'll pull its fangs out 2370
 So that it's safe to bash its head about,
 Because those fangs are its own enemy
 I'll pull them out with knowledge God gave me.
 I don't chant spells for my own benefit,
 I've turned desire around and shackled it;
 Of this world, God knows, I don't seek a part,
 Contentment's brought a new world to my heart:
 Upon the pear tree you see things pear-shaped,
 Those who came down from such vile thoughts escaped:
 You feel so giddy when you spin and whirl— 2375
 You see the house spin but it's you, my girl!

In explanation of how everyone's movement proceeds from where he is, he sees everyone from the limited perspective of his own existence: blue glass shows the sun as blue, and red glass as red; when the glass is free of colour, it becomes transparent, and is more truthful than all other glass as a leader to emulate

Abu Jahl saw Mohammad once and said:
 'An ugly thing the Hashemites* have bred!
 Mohammad said to him, 'Your words are true
 Although there's none impertinent as you.'
 Abu Bakr then exclaimed, 'My sun of light,
 Not from the east nor west, may you shine bright!'
 Mohammad said, 'Correct, companion,
 You've fled this world worth less than carrion.'

Those present asked, 'Pure chief of the elect,
How can two opposites be both correct?'
'I'm like a mirror God's cleaned to perfection,
Indians and Turks both see here their reflection.'

2380

The man said, 'Don't see me as covetous,
Transcend this womanish suspiciousness:
It looks like lust but is in fact God's grace—
When there is grace, for lust there is no space!
Try being poor a day or two, you'll see
Twice as much richness in this poverty,
Have patience with it, don't grow so uptight,
In poverty lies God's most glorious might!
Avoid being sour and many souls you'll see,
Through satisfaction, drowned in the Sweet Sea,
Thousands of bitter souls too can be found
Like roses which in syrup have been drowned.
If only you had the capacity,
Then my heart's state could be shown candidly,
Milk from the soul's breast is what I now share,
It won't flow out if no one suckles there:
When listeners feel a thirst and start to seek
Preachers, though they be dead, will start to speak!
When listeners aren't tired, but fresh as dew,
The mute find tongues with which to lecture too!
If strangers enter my house, women wear
A headscarf that can cover all their hair,*
If relatives should enter in their place,
Then they would lift their veils back off their face.
Whatever people try to beautify
They just embellish for the seeing eye:
How can the harp's sweet music that you hear
Have been made just to please a tone deaf ear!
God didn't make musk fragrant just for fun—
It's for those who can smell, not everyone!
God has set up the land and sky you view
And put both fire and light between the two;

2385

2390

2395

The earth is made just for terrestrials,
 The sky's the home of all celestials,
 The base man is the lofty's bitter foe,
 The customer for each place we all know.

'Veiled girl,' he said, 'Have you now lost your mind? 2400
 Would you put make-up on just for the blind?
 The world with precious pearls if I should strew,
 If they're not your share, what good will it do?
 No longer fight or try to lead astray,
 Or give me up instead, dear wife, today!
 I do not wish to fight with enemies,
 From righteous actions even my heart flees—
 Stay silent or I'll take this seriously
 And leave behind our home immediately!'

*The wife takes notice of her husband and seeks
 forgiveness for her words*

And when his wife saw him wild as a bear 2405
 She started crying—tears are woman's snare:
 She sobbed, 'I'd never guessed what you might do,
 I'd hoped for something different from you!'
 With self-negation she came to his side:
 'I'm more your dust than your beloved bride;
 I'm yours in soul and body, totally,
 You now possess the power to order me;
 If I lost patience with being poor, it was
 On your account, my pain is not the cause:
 You are my medicine for every ache, 2410
 I don't want you in need, it's for your sake,
 It's not about my own wants that I care,
 I scream and moan for your sake, this I swear—
 By God, for your sake you will find that I
 Would sacrifice myself, for you I'd die!
 Would that your soul, which mine's devoted to,
 Could know what my soul thinks, my honest view!

Since you thought very badly then of me,
Of soul and body I long to be free,
And gold and silver I would throw away 2415
For you to not react like this today!
You occupy my heart and soul throughout—
For this small slip of mine would you walk out?
You have the power to just walk away
Although my soul pleads that you'll choose to stay.
Remember me, your idol from before,
The one you used to worship and adore?
I've lit my heart now to agree with you,
If you say "cooked" I'll say "All the way through!"
For I'm your spinach, one small dish you eat, 2420
You're worth it, whether with sour sauce or sweet!
I blasphemed then, but now I understand,
With all my heart I follow your command,
I didn't recognize your royal traits,
I interrupted but a good wife waits.
I've fashioned now a torch from your compassion,
Repenting, I've abandoned opposition,
I've placed before you both a sword and shroud
To chop my head off which has been too proud!
You speak of separation's agonies— 2425
Do what you wish to do, but not that please!
Your spirit pleads within you now for me,
It intercedes like this perpetually,
Your loving nature pleads my case within,
Relying on it, my heart sought out sin—
Stop feeling angry now, be merciful,
Sweeter than honey by the bucketful!

She spoke thus kindly and with some success
And she would pause to shed tears in distress,
Her tears and sobbing soon became excessive, 2430
Though she already was for him impressive—
That pain produced a lightning bolt, which lit
A spark inside his heart and made it split:

That pretty face which turns you to her slave,
 When she acts servile, how must you behave!
 That one whose arrogance astonished you
 Now cries in front of you—what can you do?
 That one whose proud rebuffs made your heart bleed
 Can do more damage now she comes in need!
 We've all been trapped once in her tyranny— 2435
 Now she is begging, what are we to plea?
*It's beautified for men,** God gave it shape;
 So how can men know where they can escape?
 So *he's consoled by her** she was created:
 Can Adam then from Eve be separated?
 A Hamza and Rostam in bravery—
 His wife still keeps him bound in slavery,
 Although his words could make the whole world sway,
 '*Please redhead, speak to me!*'* he still would say;
 Water puts out the flames which winds just fan 2440
 But boils away when heated in a pan,
 For if a pan should separate the two
 It will evaporate in front of you.
 Though outwardly above her you may tower,
 You want her, so within she has the power.
 This love's the special human quality;
 Beasts lack it—that's their inferiority.

*In explanation of the saying 'Women prevail over intelligent men,
 while ignorant men prevail over them'*

The Prophet once said, 'Women all control
 Intelligent men, those who have a soul,
 But stupid men rule women, for they're crude 2445
 And hold a simple, bullish attitude.'
 They lack all tenderness and can't be kind—
 Their animal soul still controls their mind:
 Tenderness is a human quality,
 While lust and rage show animality,
 A ray from God is that one whom you love,
 Creative, uncreated, from above.

The man submits to his wife's request that he should seek a livelihood, regarding her opposition as a sign from God:

*To those who have the knowledge to discern
What spins you round's the thing that makes you turn*

The things his wife said made the man feel shame
Like dying officers who don't want blame:
'I have become my lover's foe,' he said, 2450
'How did I kick my own soul in the head!'
Our sight is veiled whenever fate decrees,
Our mind can't tell our elbows from our knees,
But once it's passed, our mind then starts to mourn:
It rips our shirt now that the veil's been torn!
He said, 'I feel ashamed, my darling wife,
I've strayed, but now I seek a righteous life:
I've sinned against you, please act mercifully,
Please don't uproot my heart immediately!
If an old infidel feels as I do 2455
Once he repents he's then a Muslim too.'
Through love of God, who's kind and generous,
All of existence feels delirious—
He's loved by faith and infidelity:
Copper and gold both serve in alchemy.

*In explanation of why Moses and Pharaoh were both
compelled by God's decree like poison and antidote,
darkness and light, and of Pharaoh's prayers in solitude
to God that He would not shatter his reputation*

Moses and Pharaoh both served God this way,
Moses seemed guided, Pharaoh led astray;
Moses would weep for God when it was light,
Pharaoh would do that in the dark at night:
'What is this halter on my neck?' he'd pray, 2460
'Without it, "I am I" how could I say!

While you've illumined Moses like a spark
 By that same power you've made this servant dark:
 You've lit just like the moon his radiant face,
 My moon-like soul you've turned black with disgrace;
 My star's dependent on this moon for light—
 Now it's eclipsed how can I still shine bright?
 Saying I am "the lord", slaves start drum rolls
 But it's for the eclipse men beat their bowls:*
 They all raise such a clamour for one aim— 2465
 So that this moon may thus be put to shame.
 Although I'm Pharaoh, I'm a desperate soul,
 Each calls me "highest lord", then beats his bowl!
 We're fellow servants, but your axe still chops
 The branches that it chooses in this copse,
 Then joins a branch back to its trunk once more
 While other branches it will just ignore:
 But over your axe power each branch lacks,
 No branch has yet escaped this ruthless axe—
 Since your axe has the power to dictate, 2470
 Would you please make all crooked things now straight!
 Pharaoh said to himself once more, 'How odd!
 Do I not pray throughout the night to God?
 I'm meek in secret, and in harmony—
 When I reach Moses what becomes of me?'
 The guilt of false gold has ten coats, but turns
 Pitch black when it is brought near flames, and burns.

My body follows Him, my heart as well,
 One moment I'm the kernel, then the shell:
 He tells me 'Be a field!' and I turn green, 2475
 'Be ugly!'—I turn paler than you've seen,
 A moon that's bright then black, deprived of light:
 This is the way God works—am I not right?
 Before '*Be! And it was*'* brings His decree
 We run in place and placelessness, so free,
 Once colour has hemmed colourlessness in
 Two Moseses their warring then begin,

When colourlessness is acquired again
Moses and Pharaoh even make peace then.
If doubts come to you still about this state, 2480
How can this point be free from all debate?
Colourlessness to colour—that's the wonder,
And how they should begin to fight each other:
Oil is made up of water, isn't it?
So why then is oil water's opposite?
If you should try to mix them, you will see
That they will keep apart so stubbornly.
Since rose and thorn belong together too,
Why then is constant fighting all they do?
Is it real war, or wisdom in disguise 2485
Like donkey-sellers' fights*—just for our eyes?
Or neither—just confusion for our mind:
The treasure in this ruin one might find.
Your treasure with real treasure you confuse,
Such thoughts mean that real treasure you will lose,
Such fancies are like populated land—
Treasure is not found there, you understand;
Such settlements are filled with life and war—
Non-being felt such shame at what it saw!
Being did not try fleeing Non-existence 2490
But It sent being home despite resistance:
'I'm fleeing Non-existence' don't you claim!
It runs away from you, but you've no shame!
It calls you to itself just outwardly,
But drives you off with cudgels inwardly,
Like changing footprints so you can't be tracked:.*
Pharaoh's distaste is Moses's in fact.

*The reason for the disappointment of the wretched with
both worlds, for 'He has lost this world and the hereafter'**

Once a philosopher claimed this, I've heard:
'The sky's an egg, its yolk earth'—how absurd!
So someone asked, 'How does the earth then stay 2495
Surrounded totally by sky this way,

Just like a lantern hanging in the air,
 Not moving even slightly while it's there?'
 Then the logician said, 'It's the sky's pull
 From all the six directions to the full,
 Like a magnetic vault, continually,
 It holds it like some iron centrally.'
 He then said, 'You are claiming it's the sky
 Which draws this dark earth, but I can't see why:
 Perhaps it just repels from every side 2500
 With heavy winds that keep the earth inside.'
 The perfect with their minds repel this way
 So Pharaoh's wayward soul is kept at bay—
 Due to repulsion from both worlds, my friend,
 The lost are left with neither in the end.

Even if you should shun God's slaves today,
 They're sick of your existence anyway;
 They've amber which affects you just like straw,
 Inducing frenzy in you and sheer awe,
 But when they hide their amber, your submission 2505
 You quickly change again to fierce sedition:
 Your rank becomes mere animality—
 This is bound by and needs humanity,
 While this humanity the saints control—
 Like animals we need them in this role:
 The Prophet called 'my servants' all mankind,
 Recite then, '*O my servants!*'* for the blind.
 Your brain's the camel-driver driving you!
 It drags you everywhere and whips you too!
 The saint rules all your intellects, so they 2510
 Are just like camels in their driver's sway—
 Look carefully, and keep this fact in mind:
 There's one guide with a thousand souls behind.
 You ask me, 'Who's the driver? Who's the guide?'
 Find eyes which see the sun and then decide!
 The world has been nailed down throughout the night,
 Waiting just for the sun to spread its light:

Here in an atom is a hidden sun,
A lion in a lamb's skin—he's the one!
A sea that's hidden under straw—take care 2515
Not to step by mistake now over there!
Doubts and mistakes about guides may be part
Of grace, though this may seem strange at the start.
Each prophet came alone down here below,
His sole guide was unseen, so none could know:
He charmed the world in its entirety
And hid in a small form, so none could see:
The stupid thought him weak and all alone—
How can the king's companion be so prone!
They said 'He's just a man and nothing more,' 2520
But sadly didn't know what lay in store.

*The senses' eyes see Saleh and his she-camel as wretched
and without a friend. When God wishes to destroy an army, he
makes their foes seem wretched and few, even though that foe
may be superior: 'He belittled you in their eyes so that God
could bring to pass something that needed to be done'**

Saleh's she-camel seemed no different,
So wretches maimed her who were ignorant:
With water these vile wretches were so mean,
For God's bestowal of water they'd not seen;
God's camel then drank from some distant pools,
God's water they'd refused to God—what fools!
The camel, like the bodies of good men,
Brought the destruction of the evil then,
God's she-camel, her share* thus you can see 2525
Caused death and pain to this community.
The officer of God's wrath then laid down
Her blood-price as the people of that town.
Spirit is Saleh, body his maimed steed,
Spirit's in union, body's filled with need,
Saleh's pure soul can't be a sufferer,
The essence wasn't maimed, they harmed just her,

And Saleh's spirit doesn't suffer grief—
God's light is not harmed by men's unbelief.
God joined it with the body in one place 2530
So grief and trials Man would have to face,
Not knowing they are God's essentially,
That his own jarful comes from the deep sea.
God joined the body with an aim in mind:
To serve as a safe refuge for mankind—
So serve the bodies of the saints who save,
With Saleh's spirit be a fellow slave.
Saleh said, 'You have shown your jealous ways
So punishment will come down in three days;
After three days, the One who can take life 2535
Will send these signs of your impending strife:
Your face will change its hue repeatedly,
A range of colours which all men will see:
Your skin will turn to saffron straight away,
Then red just like a rose on the next day;
The third day every face will turn pitch black
And after that God's wrath will soon attack.
You want a sign of this threat? Can't you see
Her foal run to the mountains desperately?
There's hope still if you stop him reaching there, 2540
If not, the bird of hope will flee its snare.'
No one could catch that foal as it raced on;
It reached the mountains, and then it was gone:
Spirits flee bodies, their main source of shame,
The Lord of Mercy being their sole aim.
Saleh said, 'His decree has not been read,
Hope was pinned down, and now they've chopped its head!'
What is the camel's foal? One's lofty mind
Which you can bring back home by being kind:
If it returns, you've then escaped all harm, 2545
If not, in sheer despair you'll bite your arm.
They thus heard all about their gloomy fate,
And stared down, for all they could do was wait;
On the first day, they saw that they'd turned pale
And in despair they all began to wail.

Then on the second day, they turned bright red—
All hope they'd had was now replaced with dread;
The third day, they all turned black in the face,
Saleh's claims all proved true—they had no case.
When they became filled with the worst despair, 2550
They knelt like birds just landed from the air;
In revelation Gabriel would dictate
With '*jathemin*'* that men must fall prostrate—
Prostrate when you're taught how to fall this way
And when you're told to on that dreaded day!
They waited for his wrath's blows to descend;
It came and wiped them out—that was their end.
Saleh left his seclusion for that place,
A smoke cloud was the last remaining trace.
He could hear body parts scream mournfully 2555
Though when he looked no mourners could he see:
He heard some moaning from their scattered bones—
Their souls, instead of tears, shed solid stones;
Saleh screamed, this was more than he could take,
He started mourning for these mourners' sake:
'You've made me weep for you, community,
You wasted all your lives on vanity!
God told me, "Suffer their abuse and give
Advice to them—they haven't long to live."
I said, "Advice gets blocked by cruelty, 2560
Its milk flows out with love and purity—
They've forced me to endure such awful pains
Advice's milk has clotted in my veins!"
God said, "My grace and kindness I will send
And place a plaster on your wounds, my friend."
He made my heart clear as a sunny day,
From my thoughts sweeping your abuse away,
I then returned to counselling again,
Shared parables like sugar with all men:
Fresh milk from sugar in this way I made, 2565
Mixed milk with honey in what I conveyed—
Those words became like poison in your heart
Since you were filled with poison from the start!

Why should I grieve that grief has now been slain?
 You stubborn people were my grief and pain!
 Who mourns that grief through dying has been stopped,
 Or that a painful boil has finally popped?
 'You mourner,' to himself he turned and said,
 'That corpse does not deserve the prayers you've read.
 Reciter, don't you now make a mistake: 2570
*Why should I feel bad for the wicked's sake.**
 To weeping with his heart he now returned;
 An undeserved compassion in him burned.
 He shed tears in distress increasingly,
 Drops from the sea of generosity.
 His intellect asked him, 'Why weep, you fool?
 Or mourn those who preferred to ridicule?
 What are you crying for? Their deeds? Tell me!
 For that malicious, wicked company?
 For their dark, rusty hearts, your heart now breaks? 2575
 Their tongues were venomous just like a snake's!
 Or for their dog-breath do you breathe such sighs,
 Or for their scorpion's nest of mouths and eyes?
 Or for their squabbling, sneering and abuse?
 Give thanks that God will never let them loose!
 Their hands and feet and eyes were out of place,
 Their love and peace and anger a disgrace;
 To follow the traditions of their sect
 They stamped upon the guiding intellect:
 They've turned to donkeys, they don't want a guide, 2580
 They choose to show off and to worship pride;
 From heaven God brought down his slaves to see
 How they're prepared for hell so perfectly!'

*Concerning the meaning of 'He lets the seas meet each other with a
 gap which they don't encroach upon'**

The source of hell and heaven's guests is one,
 Though there's a gap they don't encroach upon:
 The men of fire and those of light He's mixed
 Although Mount Qaf between them He has fixed,

Like in a mine He's mixed plain soil with gold
 Though for such different prices they'll be sold,
Like necklaces of pearl and cheap black stone: 2585
 Strange fellow guests who'll soon depart alone.
Half of the sea tastes sweet and sugary,
 Bright like the moon, as clear as it can be,
The other half's like bitter venom, which
 As well as tasting foul is black as pitch;
They crash against each other as waves do,
 As if one sea not forced apart as two:
Confinement makes forms clash within its cell,
 Souls thus are mixed in peace and war as well:
The waves of peace collide with wondrous might, 2590
 Uprooting from men's breasts all hate and spite.
The waves of war though take a different form,
 Inverting our loves like a thunder storm:
Love draws the bitter to the sweet by force
 For love is rightly guided by its source.
Wrath drags the sweet to bitterness, but how
 Can bitterness suit sweetness—tell me now!
Bitter and sweet are not seen by your sight,
 Only the furthest window sheds such light.
The eye that sees the end sees properly, 2595
 While seeing just this world's delusory;
Many things look like sugar but are not,
 Like poison hidden in the sugar pot!
The wiser ones detect it by its smell,
 Some after they have tasted it as well:
Their lips reject it thus before their throats
 Although the devil bellows, 'Eat!' and gloats!
Another through his throat knows he'll be ill,
 The next once it has travelled further still,
Another feels it burning when he shits— 2600
 The pain will crush his liver now to bits!
The next one after several months perceives,
 Another, after dying, finally grieves—
If in the grave he finds respite, then he
 On Resurrection Day will finally see.

Each sugar cube in this world too receives
 Its own allotted time before it leaves,
 Rubies need years beneath the sun's pure light
 To purify their hue and shine so bright;
 In just two months though garden herbs may grow, 2605
 To bloom a red rose needs a year or so—
 This is why God explained in the Koran
 He's given an appointed time to Man—
 If you have heard your hairs will all stick up,
 Water of Life* He's poured into your cup:
 Call this the Draught of Life* and not mere speech—
 In an old word new spirit is in reach.

Now listen to a further point, my friend,
 Clear as the soul but hard to comprehend:
 At one stage on this path snake venom changes 2610
 To wholesome food—it's God that rearranges:
 Poison can be a drug that brings relief
 And lawful things there are here unbelief,
 Things harmful to the soul in that pure sphere
 Can be a remedy when they're down here:
 Unripe grapes are too sour for us to eat
 But when those same grapes ripen, they taste sweet:
 As wine it's bitter and prohibited
 But vinegar's use is unlimited.

*Concerning the fact that the disciple should not be arrogant and do the same thing as the saint does, for halva does not harm the doctor but does harm the sick patient, and the snow and the cold does not harm ripe grapes but does harm unripe grapes, for they are still on the way to 'That God may forgive you your past and future sins'**

If saints drink poison it becomes a cure, 2615
 If novices drink they become impure.
 'Lord grant me!' was the plea of Solomon:
 He meant 'Give me alone dominion,

To others don't be kind and generous',
 He wasn't being simply envious:
 With heart '*It is not suitable*' now read,
 '*After me*'* wasn't avarice or greed:
 In kingship he'd faced danger and much strife
 Enough to make one fear for one's own life,
 For head and soul and faith it makes one scared— 2620
 We've not faced trials that can be compared!
 Solomon's aspiration you require
 To shun cheap vanities and aim much higher.
 Despite his strength he couldn't conquer death:
 His kingdom's waves eventually blocked his breath,
 Dust settled on him from this agony,
 For other kings he thus felt sympathy.
 He spoke for them: 'This royalty of mine—
 Give it completely, just as strong and fine,
 To whomsoever you should smile upon, 2625
 For I am he and he is Solomon.
 He isn't *after me* but *with me* here
 But what's *with me* when I've no claimants near?'
 You'll need an explanation first to learn
 But to the couple's tale I'll now return.

Conclusion of the incident between the bedouin and his wife

The altercation in this tale we've heard
 Requires a moral not to be absurd,
 Their tale's been told, but let's now recollect
 That parable on self and intellect,
 Or carnal soul and wisdom—understood? 2630
 Both are required to make the bad and good,
 On earth these two essentials night and day
 Are fighting and disputing every way:
 The wife wants all the household needs supplied,
 Food on the table, social rank, and pride;
 The carnal soul, like her, serves its own need,
 So now it's humble, now it wants to lead;

The higher intellect has no concerns—
 It only thinks of God with pain that burns.

Although its inner meaning is the bait, 2635

First listen to this story's form, then wait:
 If inner things are all that count, explain
 The world's creation—was it all in vain?
 If love were just in thought and spirit, there
 Would be no need for forms like fasts and prayer;
 The gifts exchanged by lovers would be naught
 But form compared with love, if that's just thought.
 For lovers, gifts serve as their evidence

Of inner love concealed from outward sense,
 Since outward acts of kindness testify 2640

To secret loves, my friend, when they don't lie;
 Your witness tells the truth then falsifies,
 Now drunk with wine, now yoghurt—truth and lies:

One drunk on yoghurt acts drunk, that is all,
 He hollers and pretends he's lost control;
 In prayer and fasting hypocrites pretend
 They're drunken saints who've reached the journey's end—
 In short, our outward actions are distinct—
 They serve to show what's hidden, thus they're linked.

Grant us discernment, God, we pray to you, 2645
 So we can recognize the false from true!

Do you know how our senses can discern?
 When they *see by the light of God** they'll learn:
 Without effects the cause still shows what's found,
 Relationships reveal love that's profound,
 The one whose leader is God's light is not
 Cause and effect's slave, victim of their plot;
 From flickers love's flame grows so tall inside,
 No longer to effects is this man tied—

He has no need now for the signs of love 2650

For love has shone its light straight from above.
 This discourse needs more space to be complete:
 Reflect on this until we next should meet.

Though meaning in this form is visible
 And form seems close, they're incomparable,
 Just like a tree and sap—although they're linked,
 In substance they are clearly quite distinct—
 Abandon substance and particulars,
 Explain the state of those two characters!

The bedouin sets his heart on fulfilling his beloved's request and swears 'This surrender of mine is not for show or as a test'

The man said, 'I no longer will persist, 2655

You have control—I'll do what you insist!
 At your command I won't make you wait long
 Nor try to judge if it is right or wrong.
 In your existence, mine I'll leave behind:

I love, and *Love makes men turn deaf and blind.*'*

The wife asked, 'Do you sing to win my heart

Or to find out my secret through your art?'

He said, '*The world of secrets is obscure.*'

Adam was made from earth but still was pure,

And in his frame God placed for all to view 2660

The Tablet's contents* and the spirit too—

Until the end whatever is in store

*He taught the names** to Adam long before.

The angels lost their wits at what was shown;

They gained more holiness than they had known,

And this growth which from Adam entered them

Came from beyond their own transcendent realm;

Compared with his expansive soul and mind

The seven heavens all seem too confined:

The Prophet said: God's said, 'Naught can hold me 2665

However deep or tall that it may be;

On earth and in the highest heavens I

Can't be contained, to this I testify,

But I'm contained in the believer's heart—

If you seek me look in that precious part!

God said, '*Come here among my slaves and see*

A paradise of images of me.'*

The highest heaven, though it has much light,
 Fell down in shock when it was shown this sight;
 Although the highest heaven is so vast, 2670
 What's form worth when pure meaning comes at last?
 Each angel then would say, 'Before we knew
 A friendship on the earth with all of you,
 We sowed the seeds of service on that land
 Though our role there we could not understand:
 "What is the link between us and that place
 When we are heavenly and that seems base?
 Why do we mix with darkness when we're light,
 Can light live with the dark? This can't be right!"
 Adam, our friendship was due to your scent, 2675
 The earth's your body's weft—that's what we meant,
 Since it was woven from the earth, it's clear,
 Your pure light too must be located here—
 From your soul what ours gained has so much worth,
 It radiated beams out from the earth.
 We were on earth, but of earth unaware,
 Heedless of all the treasure buried there;
 God told us to move from our previous station,
 We grew embittered by our relocation
 And so we kept on arguing our case, 2680
 Saying, "But Lord, who now will take our place?
 The light of all your praises that we tell
 Just for the sake of chatter would you sell?"
 We were received so well by God's decree:
 He said, "Feel free to say with liberty
 Whatever's on your mind without a fear
 Just like an only child whose words are dear,
 No matter if they're inappropriate—
 Much more than wrathful I'm compassionate.*
 Angels, in order to spell this truth out 2685
 I'll fill you with uncertainty and doubt,
 And still not take offence when you should speak—
 Deniers of My mercy wouldn't squeak!
 So many fathers in My clemency
 Are drowned, effaced like drops inside the sea;

Their clemency's the foam from My sea's tides—
It passes but its ocean source abides." ' "

Before that pearl this shell you see is dumb,
It's nothing but a worthless piece of scum,
By both the foam and that pure sea, it's plain 2690
This speech is not a trial and not in vain—
It comes from love, humility, and grace,
I swear by Him to whom I turn my face!
If this desire seems like a trial to you
Then test the trial now for a moment too!
Don't hide your secret, so mine you might view,
Command then anything that I can do—
Don't hide your heart, so mine might be disclosed
And then accept whatever is imposed.
What shall I do, and where may I begin? 2695
Look what a mess my troubled soul is in!

*The wife specifies to her husband the way to seek
daily sustenance, and he accepts*

The wife replied, 'A sun has shone its light
From which a universe has now turned bright:
The Maker's caliph, God's own deputy,
Through him Baghdad's like spring eternally—
Join with this king then you'll be one as well,
Why keep on heading to misfortune's hell?
It's alchemy, these great kings' company,
Compared with their glance what's mere alchemy!
Mohammad glanced on Abu Bakr's face 2700
He then became *veracious** through his grace.'
The husband said, 'How can I meet a king
Without a pretext for my visiting?
I have to have a link or stratagem:
Things can't be made without the tools for them.
Majnun when he heard somebody once say
That Layli had been slightly ill that day,

Said, "How can I go there without excuse?
 If I can't visit her bring me a noose!
If I were a physician I could go, 2705
I would have visited a while ago."
 For God said, "Say, come!"* freeing us from stress,
 To signal we should end our bashfulness;
 If bats had vision and ability
 By day they'd fly around so happily.'
 The wife said, 'When the king should join the fray
 Impotence turns to power straight away,
 So when your means is vile pretentiousness
 You must choose impotence and helplessness.'
 He said, 'How can I trade without the tools' 2710
 Unless I show I'm helpless and he rules?
 I must have evidence I'm penniless
 For any king to pity my distress.
 Other than words and looks show evidence
 To gain the pity of his eminence,
 For this proof based on talk and how you look
 Is immaterial in the judge's book—
 To prove your worth he wants sincerity
 Free from words, then his light shines perfectly.'

*The bedouin takes a jug of rainwater from the middle of the
 desert to Baghdad as a present for the Commander of the
 Faithful,* imagining that water is scarce there as well*

She said, 'Sincerity's to strive hard, love, 2715
 Cleansed of existence then to rise above—
 We've stored rain in this jug and now it's full:
 It's your possession, means and capital,
 So take this jug and journey to the king
 To give it to him as an offering;
 Tell him we've nothing more, he'll understand
 There's nothing finer in our desert land;
 His storehouses may have the finest fare
 But they won't have such water that's so rare.'

A bird that lives in briny brooks can't know
 The places where the cleanest waters flow:
 Those whose abode is in the briny spring
 About the Tigris don't know anything.
 You who have not escaped your transiency
 Can't know effacement, bliss and ecstasy—
 Such things are passed from father down to son
 For whom they're like the alphabet to learn:
 It's clear for every child and not so arduous 2740
 Although the meaning may not be so obvious.

He picked the jug up and went on his way,
 Holding it next to him all night and day,
 Shaking with fear it might be harmed by fate
 As he walked on towards the city's gate.
 Meanwhile, his wife unrolled a rug for prayer,
 'Lord help us!' she appealed as she knelt there,
 'Protect our water from calamity,
 Please let that pearl reach the majestic sea!
 Although my husband has much sense and skill, 2745
 The pearl has enemies that wish it ill.'
 Pearls were all Kawsar's waters to begin,
 A drop of that is each pearl's origin.
 Through his wife's supplications during prayer
 And his determination to take care,
 Safe from both theft and damage on the way
 He took it to the court without delay.
 A court filled with the best of things he found
 Where needy men had spread their nets around:
 Their needs are met each moment in that place, 2750
 Through gifts, and robes of honour they find grace,
 The Muslims, infidels, the fair, the hideous,
 Like sun and rain, for all not just the virtuous.
 He saw some being honoured, standing straight,
 And then the next in line who had to wait,
 From Solomon to ants, the first and last,
 Revived as though they'd heard the final blast,*

Those who seek form bedecked with jewellery,
Truth-seekers in Reality's pure sea,
Those previously deficient gained endeavour 2755
While those who had it now received much favour.

In explanation of the fact that, just as the beggar loves the wealth of the donor, the wealth of the donor also loves the beggar; if the beggar had more patience the donor would come to him. However, whereas patience is perfection for the beggar, for the donor it is a defect

The shout 'Come, seeker!' startled like a bell
'Munificence needs to be begged as well.'
It seeks itself the beggars and the weak
Just as clear mirrors are what fair girls seek:
A fair face by a mirror can be shown,
As beggars make beneficence well known,
And so in *By the morning** God decrees
'Don't shout, Mohammad, when the beggar pleas!' 2760
Since beggars mirror your own generous grace
Don't speak too close—you'll blur the mirror's face.
Beggars reveal men's generosity,
And which one has bestowed abundantly;
Thus beggars mirror God's munificence,
With God they turn to pure beneficence,
While all the rest are corpses, nothing more,
And they can't enter through the king's court door.

The difference between one who is needy of God with thirst for Him and one who is destitute of God and thirsts for other things

He looks a dervish but the truth is known—
Don't throw this image of a dog a bone!
It isn't God he seeks but food instead, 2765
Don't serve a plateful to a man who's dead!
The dervish who seeks food is like a newt,
He flees the sea which he appears to suit—
A housebird not the phoenix in the sky,
She eats sweet treats not food sent from on high,

She loves God simply for what He bestows,
Her soul does not love beauty, heaven knows!
She may think that she truly loves the essence
But for His attributes she dreams up nonsense;
Imaginings are formed and they were born 2770
But *He was not begotten*,* so read on:
The one who loves his own conception's face
Can't love the Generous One who has such grace,
But if that kind of lover is sincere
Through metaphor to him truth might appear;
An explanation of this is required
But I fear worn-out minds are much too tired:
Worn-out, short-sighted minds continually
Feed fancies to end our tranquillity,
And not by everyone is fine speech heard: 2775
Figs are not suitable for every bird,
Especially the dead and putrid kind,
Heads full of fancies, eyes completely blind,
Since for a fish's portrait sea and land
Are one, like soap and coal for a black hand:
Though you should paint a portrait that looks sad,
Feelings of grief and joy it's never had!
Its form is sad but it is unaware;
When its form smiles it also has no share.
This grief and joy etched in your heart are naught 2780
But a mere image next to what He's brought,
The image's form smiles still for your sake
So through it truth's expressed with no mistake;
The pictures painted on a bathhouse wall
Are just like clothes outside the changing hall:
You see just clothes so long as you're outside,
Take off your clothes, my friend, and step inside!
With clothes on you can never enter there
As body is from soul veiled, unaware.

*The caliph's chamberlains and guards step forward to honour the
bedouin and accept his gift*

Thus from the furthest desert this man came 2785

Up through the court's gates, reaching thus his aim,
Some chamberlains approached him then to spray

Rose water of pure grace on him this way;
They knew without words what he'd come to ask:
To give before they're asked was their main task.

'*Chief of the bedouins,*' they then enquired,
'Where are you from, are you not feeling tired?'

He said, 'I'm just a chief if you decree

But helpless if you turn your backs to me;
Your faces have the mark of eminence, 2790

Than Ja'far's gold* you've more magnificence;
One glimpse of you, to me, is worth much more,

Your pure faith flings such coins across the floor,
You who can *see by God's light** everything,
Who've come now to grant favours from the king,

To glance and thus perform his alchemy
On copper heads of humans just like me.

A stranger, from the desert I've arrived

In hope of royal grace, to be revived:
His grace's scent fills deserts like small holes, 2795

Thus even grains of sand gain their own souls!

I came here for some gold originally
But I've become drunk with what I now see.'

A man rushed to the bakery for bread,
But saw the baker's beauty and dropped dead!

He went just to admire the roses, but

He found the gardener more immaculate;
And at the village well in water's place

One drew the Draught of Life from Joseph's face;*
To watch a fire when Moses went one day— 2800

He managed to escape from hell this way,*
Jesus jumped up to flee the enemy—

That jump took him to heaven instantly!*

Forbidden fruit trapped Adam, as decreed,
 His being turned then to Mankind's first seed;
 For food the falcon stepped into a snare
 And found the king's wrist and good fortune there;
 A boy agreed to go to school to learn,
 His father's promised gift this way to earn—
 There he became so clever very soon 2805
 By working hard, just like a bright full moon;
 A war of vengeance Abbas came to wage
 Against the true religion of the age,
 But he and his descendants then became
 The prop of faith for centuries all the same.*
 'I came here for some profit and relief,
 Inside the gates I then became a chief,
 Water I brought in order to gain bread,
 To paradise this search for food has led.'
 Bread led to Adam's fall—what a huge price! 2810
 But food has settled me in paradise!
 From food and drink, release I now have found,
 Like heavens, at this court I whirl around;
 In this world nothing moves but through desire
 Except such lovers whose hearts are on fire.

*The lover of this world is like someone who loves a wall on which
 sunlight shines and makes no effort to understand that this
 radiance and splendour do not come from the wall but from
 the sun in the fourth heaven. Consequently, he sets his
 heart on the wall completely, and, when the rays
 of sunshine move with the sun he is left deprived
 forever: 'A gulf is fixed between them and
 what they desire'**

Some love the Whole and some love just a part,
 The latter from the Whole are kept apart;
 The one who loves a part soon also learns
 That his beloved to the Whole returns:
 Another's slave has made him look a clown— 2815
 He's clung to someone weak for fear he'd drown!

He has no power with which he can help you,
His lord and master's business he must do.

*The Arabic proverb: 'If you fornicate, do it with a free
woman; if you steal, steal a pearl!'**

They say: '*With a free woman fornicate!*'

And '*Steal a pearl!*' the Arabs too relate:

A slave went home and he was left to mourn,

Scent blew back to the rose, he kept the thorn—

He was left far off from the one he'd sought,

His feet were sore, his efforts were for naught;

If hunters catch the shadow of a bird

2820

Is this worth anything? Don't be absurd!

One grabs the shadow, waves, victorious,

A bird perched on the tree grows curious:

'Why does he laugh when he's a stupid fool?

He's so deluded, duller than a mule!

'The part's joined with the Whole,' I hear you say.

Eat thorns then! They're joined to the rose, aren't they!

There's only one way to join with the Whole

Or else His messengers would have no role:

Since messengers are sent to join as one

2825

What can join them when they're in union?

This discourse could go on for long, my friend,

It's getting late, it's time this tale should end:

The bedouin presents the gift, that is the jug, to the caliph's servants

He held that jug of water in the air,

Thus sowed the seed of service over there:

'Now take this present to the sultan, please,

Then free from need this beggar on his knees;

Here's a new jug containing water which

Had gathered when it rained into a ditch.'

Although this made the servants smile a bit

2830

As a most precious gift they handled it,

Because the king's informed munificence
 On all the court exerted influence:
 In subjects their king's nature can be seen,
 The sky's what makes the earth turn bright and green,
 His slaves are pipes, the king's the reservoir,
 Water flows through the pipes to fill each jar.
 When all the water's from a source that's pure
 Each one has water which tastes sweet, for sure,
 But if it's bitter and polluted too 2835
 Each pipe delivers filth this way to you,
 For every pipe's connected to its source—
 Ponder the meaning of this fine resource!
 The grace of each man's exiled royal soul
 Affects so much his body as a whole:
 Intelligence that's of pure origin
 Has brought the body under discipline,
 Love which brings victims instability
 Drives the whole body to insanity;
 The ocean like Kawsar* holds so much grace 2840
 That pearls and jewels take its pebbles' place;
 The art for which a teacher is renowned,
 Among his students too that art is found:
 With learned theologians students read
 Theology if they're wise and take heed,
 The law professor's students learn his science—
 That's not theology but jurisprudence,
 And through the grammar teacher at all schools
 The students learn by heart our grammar's rules,
 Through one effaced on this path students learn 2845
 Effacement in the king who makes hearts burn—
 Of all these types of knowledge you will see
 The best is knowledge of our poverty.

The story of the encounter between a grammarian and a boatman

Once a grammarian stepped into a boat
 And turned towards the oarsman just to gloat:

‘Have you learned any grammar?’ He said, ‘No.’
‘Then half your life’s been wasted just to row!’
Although this made the oarsman burn with pain
From answering back he opted to refrain.
Wind steered the boat towards a whirlpool there— 2850
The oarsman shouted to him, once aware,
‘Have you learned how to swim and keep afloat?’
‘I’ve never learned, skilled captain of my boat.’
‘Grammarians, your whole life has been in vain:
We’re sinking fast—what good now is your brain!’
Not grammar but effacement’s needed here—
If self-effaced dive in and have no fear!
While corpses can float on a stormy sea,
How can the living find security?
When you have died to human qualities 2855
You’ll be borne by the sea of mysteries.
He who called others ‘donkey’ pays the price—
He’s now left skidding like an ass on ice!
Even if you’re the scholar of the age,
Observe the passing of this world, deep sage!
We’ve silenced the grammarian in narration
To teach the grammar of annihilation,
The law of law and grammar that’s most pure
You’ll find through being less, of this be sure.
The jug of water is our knowledge, while 2860
The caliph’s is the Tigris and the Nile.
We’re taking our own jugs of water there—
We’re donkeys, even if we’re unaware!
The bedouin had an excuse and cause,
Not knowing back home what the Tigris was:
If he had known the Tigris like those near
He wouldn’t then have carried his jug here—
If of the River Tigris he had known,
He would have slammed the jug upon a stone!

The caliph accepts the present and orders gifts to be bestowed even though he is completely without need of that present

The caliph saw this man and heard of him, 2865
 Then filled his jug with gold up to the brim,
 He saved that bedouin from poverty,
 Gave gifts and robes of honour generously,
 Then to his servants he gave this command,
 That world-bestower with this generous hand:
 'Hand him this jug that I've filled up with gold;
 Show him the Tigris too!' his men were told.
 'By land he slowly journeyed here in need
 But on the Tigris he'll return with speed.'
 He reached the Tigris on a boat, and bowed, 2870
 Prostrated, blushed with shame and cried aloud:
 'That generous king was unbelievable—
 His taking my gift was incredible!
 How did that sea of generosity
 Accept my worthless present readily?'
 The whole world is a jug which you can stop,
 Knowledge and beauty fills it to the top,
 But near the Tigris that's a drop of rain—
 The boundless Tigris no jug can contain.

A hidden treasure* opened when too full 2875
 And made the world so bright and bountiful:
 Its fullness made it boil and spill like milk,
 Making the earth a sultan dressed in silk.
 Of God's great Tigris if he'd seen a bit
 He would have smashed the jug, effacing it—
 On viewing it, men always lose control,
 Through jealousy they throw stones at their bowl:
 You've thrown stones at your jug through jealousy,
 It smashed, becoming perfect totally!
 The jug has shattered, but now water's poured, 2880
 Perfection's what this shattering has restored,

The jug's parts now all dance delirious—
To intellects that sounds ridiculous!
Now neither jug nor water's manifest,
Look at it and enjoy—*God knows what's best.*
Knock on reality's inviting door,
Let thought take wing, like falcons you will soar!
Your thought's wing's mud-stained and weighs more than lead
Because you now eat mud instead of bread—
Eat less of meat with bread since they form clay, 2885
Then you won't stick like mud to earth this way:
When hungry you're a dog in temperament,
So fierce, aggressive, and malevolent;
When full you're like a carcass in the dirt,
Just like a wall you're ignorant, inert:
A rotting carcass then, a wild dog now,
You claim the path of lions anyhow!
The dog's your only help in hunting prey:
Feed it much less, so it will then obey!
If it grows proud and disobedient 2890
It won't race happily towards the hunt.
Want drove that bedouin along the road
Towards the court, where fortune was bestowed;
Of the great king's beneficence we've told,
His generous granting of a jug of gold.

When lovers speak love's scent is smelt on them,
It comes out of their mouths in love's pure realm;
If he talks law, then poverty is heard—
Poverty's whiff spreads from his every word;
If unbelief, then we smell true faith's scent, 2895
Certainty's perfume from his argument:
The crooked wave that's risen in the sea
Is sound—its origin's sincerity;
Consider that wave pure and worthy too
Like the beloved's mouth reproaching you:
That harsh expression which you didn't seek
Became so sweet because it showed his cheek.

His words are true though faults you first detect—

What crookedness which can make things correct!

If you bake sugar in the shape of bread, 2900

It won't taste like a loaf, but sweet instead:

A golden idol's found by a believer—

He'll keep it from the heathen unbeliever,

He'll burn it in a bonfire straight away

To break its transient, borrowed form this way,

So that the idol's form won't last in gold

And thus mislead men from truths they've been told.

Gold's essence has come from divinity:

The idol's form in gold is temporary.

Because of one flea don't burn the whole rug, 2905

Don't be distracted by a fly or bug!

You worship idols when fixed in form's realm,

Leave form behind, find meaning inside them!

To make the Hajj* seek a companion

Though he be Arab, Turk, or Indian;

Don't judge him by his figure, form, or name,

But look at his intention and true aim;

Though he is black he's in accord with you,

He shares your hue within—call him white too!

This story has been told the wrong way round 2910

Like thoughts of helpless lovers that astound:

Headless, predating pre-eternity,

Tailless, for it's like post-eternity,

But it's like water: every single drop

Is head and tail and neither—I should stop,

For God knows this is not a tale to share

But the pure substance of our state—beware!

The Sufi has achieved true mastery,

Of past things this man has no memory.

We are all three: jug, king, and bedouin! 2915

They've turned away from it—they're vile within!*

Reason's the husband, greed the wife, that's right,

Both dark deniers of true wisdom's light.

Now listen to how such denial starts

Because the world consists of various parts,

For parts aren't separate from the whole: your nose
Breathes in the scent which is part of the rose;
Leaves to the rose's beauty too belong,
The dove's coo to the nightingale's sweet song.

If I put problems and their answers first, 2920
I can't give water to those who have thirst;
If problems make you feel much stress and grief,
Be patient—*patience is what brings relief!*
Abstain from thoughts though they tempt and harass—
The heart's the forest, thought a crazed wild-ass!
The best of medicines is abstinence,
Scratching increases itches, even once,
For this is medicine's key principle—
Abstain and watch your soul grow powerful.
Prick up your ears to hear what I have told 2925
And I'll make you an earring of pure gold
To mark you as a servant of the moon,
So you will soar up to the heavens soon.
Created things are so diverse, it's said
They differ like the letters A to Z;
The different letters may need sorting out
Although from one view they're the same throughout:
From one view opposites, from one the same,
From one view serious, from one a game!
On Resurrection we face scrutiny, 2930
The beautiful wait for it eagerly,
But if you're like an Indian cheat that day
You'll be disgraced, your cover blown away!
Since his face isn't sun-like, clear, and bright,
He wants to hide beneath the veil of night;
He's just a thorn without one petal, so
Spring is the secret of this rose's foe,
For one who's like a rose all over, spring
Is a reunion that he's welcoming;
Autumn is what the soulless thorns prefer, 2935
Rose gardens then are not superior:

Their beauty's covered like the thorn's own shame:
 You can't tell them apart, they look the same,
 So autumn gives it life instead of spring—
 Then stones and rubies look like the same thing;
 God's gardener spots it in the autumn too,
 His glance sees more than the whole world can view:
 That person has the whole world in his soul:
 Celestial stars are part of the moon's whole,
 And thus each image is now beckoning, 2940
 'Glad tidings everyone, here comes the spring!'
 When blossom's radiant like a coat of mail,
 How then can fruits their charming form unveil?
 When blossom falls, that's when fruit takes its place,
 When bodies are destroyed souls lift their face—
 Fruit is the spirit, blossom is its form,
 Blossom's good news, fruit ripens when it's warm:
 When blossom's shed, fruit then begins to show,
 When one's decreased, the other starts to grow;
 How can bread nourish till it's broken up? 2945
 Can uncrushed grapes become wine in your cup?
 Unless some healing herbs are ground with it
 How can a medicine give benefit!

On the nature of the Sufi guide and obedience to him

Hosamoddin, please fetch a sheet or two
 And write about the guide what I tell you;
 Although you're frail, lack strength and energy,
 Without the sun there is no light for me,
 Though you've become *the lamp and glass*,* my friend,
 You lead the hearts which follow the thread's end:
 You hold the thread's end, from which you won't part; 2950
 Your bounty gave the pearls strung round my heart!
 Write down about the guide what I now say
 And choose him—he's the essence of the way,
 The guide's the summer, others autumn's blight,
 He's like the moon, while they're the dark at night.

I've called young fortune, my Hosam, 'old sage'
 For he's mature with God, though not in age:
 Without beginning he's extremely old,
 A rare pearl whose description can't be told:
 He grows more potent just like vintage wine, 2955
 Especially the drink *that is divine*.
 Don't try this path alone, first choose a guide!
 Its dangerous trials will leave you petrified!
 Even on routes which numerous times you've used
 Without a guide you're hopelessly confused—
 Beware then of this new, uncharted way,
 Keep focused on your guide, don't turn away!
 If you're not safe in his protective shade,
 The monster's wails will leave you stunned, afraid,
 Diverting you straight into further harm— 2960
 Much shrewder men than you could not keep calm.
 Heed the Koran on those who went astray*
 And how the wicked Satan made them pay:
 He lured them all a thousand miles from here,
 Reducing them to nakedness and fear—
 Look at their bones and hair, and now take heed!
 Don't be an ass, don't let your passions lead!
 Grab hold of its thick neck and pull it back
 Towards the knowing guide's specific track,
 If left alone this donkey's bound to stray 2965
 Across the field towards the mounds of hay;
 Don't you forget to hold with force its leash
 Or it will bolt for miles to find hashish!
 A donkey drugged—what greater enemy!
 That donkey's ruined countless—can't you see?
 If you don't know the proper path, just do
 The opposite of what it wants you to:
 Consult them, then do just the opposite!
 Or else you'll always be regretting it.*
 A friendship with desire you can't afford, 2970
 It leads you off the path towards the Lord,*
 But nothing conquers passion better than
 The company of fellow travellers can:

*The messenger of God advises Ali, 'Since everyone seeks proximity to God by means of an act of worship, seek proximity through companionship with the special sage and servant of God, so that you can excel all the rest'**

The Prophet called Ali once to his side,
 'Lion of God,* brave hero of my pride!
 Don't count on courage on its own to cope,
 Take refuge too beneath the tree of hope:
 Enter the realm of that pure intellect
 Whom no opponent can from truth deflect.'

His shadow is just like Mount Qaf* in size, 2975
 His spirit like the phoenix soars the skies,
 We could continue with this man's applause
 Until the end of time without a pause,
 He is the sun, though human in our sight,
 Please understand that *God knows best what's right.*

'Of all the good deeds on the path, Ali,
 You choose God's special slave as sanctuary,
 Others perform each single righteous deed
 So from their carnal souls they might be freed.

Instead step in the shade of this true sage 2980
 To flee that hidden enemy's tight cage;
 Of all the acts of worship it's the best,
 It makes you that much better than the rest.'

If he accepts, surrender to the guide
 Like Moses with his master Khezzr* once tried,
 Stay calm, don't question what he should commit,
 So he won't say, '*Enough! Here's where we split!*'*

If he destroys their boat, don't you go wild,
 Don't tear your hair out if he kills a child!
 Since God has said, 'His hand is as my own', 2985
 And '*Up above their hands rests God's alone,*'*

With God's own hand he slays the helpless boy,
 To let him live with pure, eternal joy.

Whoever tried this journey on his own
The guides still helped—he didn't walk alone;
The guide's hand is for all across the land,
It has to be then naught but God's own hand;
If absent people can gain gifts galore
Those present with the guide must gain much more,
If absent men receive such gifts for naught 2990
Imagine what his personal guests are brought;
You can't compare his faithful followers
With those who choose to be mere onlookers.
Don't be too squeamish when your guide's around,
As weak as water, crumbly like soft ground,
When each blow leaves you bitter, don't expect
Without pain like a mirror to reflect.

A man from Qazvin gets tattooed with the image of a
lion on his shoulder but regrets it because of the pain
caused by the needle*

Now listen to this tale on what I've seen
And heard about the people of Qazvin:
Their shoulders, arms, and bodies they tattoo 2995
With needles and a special ink that's blue.
One of them asked a barber casually,
'Please draw a beautiful tattoo on me.'
He asked, 'What image do you have your eye on?'
He said, 'Tattoo the figure of a lion;
Leo is my ascendant, so I think
A roaring lion's best—use lots of ink!'
He said, 'Now all I need to know is where?'
'Across my shoulder-blades—you'll find space there.'
But when the barber stuck the needle in 3000
The man felt pain he couldn't bear begin:
Our fearless hero screamed, 'Aargh! Stop it, sir!
What are you stabbing like a murderer!'
'You did ask for a lion, didn't you?'
He wailed, 'What part was it that you just drew?'

'I started the tattoo back with the tail.'

'Leave that bit out, for it's of no avail.

I've just been strangled by its tail and rear,

They blocked my windpipe, which before was clear!

So draw a tailless lion now instead,

3005

That needle of yours fills my heart with dread!

He started then to draw another bit,

Not showing mercy or restraint in it.

The man then screamed, 'Which part have you drawn here?'

He said, 'Its ears, dear fellow, have no fear.'

'Let it be earless, nobody will see,

Leave out the ears, and finish rapidly!'

He now pricked somewhere else just as before,

The hero from Qazvin complained once more:

'Which part is this? I'm sure I must have bled!'

3010

'It's just the lion's stomach, friend,' he said.

'I beg you, leave the stomach out as well!

Don't prick so deeply, please, this hurts like hell!'

The barber grew confused and so perplexed,

He bit his finger, wondering what's next,

Then finally flung his needle on the ground,

And shouted, 'Where is such a lion found

Without a tail and ears, and stomach too?

No lion like this lives, I swear to you!'

Brother, you have to bear the needle's pain

3015

To flee your infidel self's poisonous reign;

Sky, sun, and moon bow down and show obeisance

To that group who've escaped their own existence:

The sun and clouds obey what's specified

By those whose self-love has completely died;

Their hearts have learned to light their lamps, and so

The sun can't burn them with its fiery glow:

The sun moved strangely, far apart it kept,

*Turning thus from the cave** where that group slept;

The thorn too turned completely to the rose:

3020

Towards the universal each part goes.

How can a man praise God, the lord of all?

Be like mere dust, contemptible and small!

What can men learn about God's being one?
To burn themselves in Him just like the sun!
If like the day you wish to shine so bright,
Burn up your being, for that's like the night—
Like copper burn yourself with alchemy
In that One who gives being generously!
You've clung fast to the self of 'I' and 'you'
Although all wretchedness stems from these two.

3025

*The wolf and the fox go to the hunt in
attendance on the lion*

Attended by the wolf and fox, one day
The lion climbed the mountain to find prey,
With mutual support this group of three
Thought they might hunt them more effectively,
Combining forces in that vast terrain
More catches thus they hoped that they would gain.
The lion, though embarrassed by this pair,
Still honoured them by letting them come there,
For such kings feel they're burdened by their troops,
But he agreed, for blessings come from groups:
The moon is shamed by stars, in honesty,
It lets them near through generosity.
Was not the Prophet told, '*Consult them too!*'*
Though no one had as good a point of view,
On scales we pair mere iron weights with gold
Though for a fraction of gold's worth they're sold;
The body is the spirit's travelling mate,
The guard dog serves the king at his court's gate.
Towards the mountain then they made their way,
Accompanying the lion on that day;
They caught an ox, a goat, and a fat hare,
Thus had a most successful hunt out there:
Whoever backs a lion in the fight
Will never lack his meat by day or night.

3030

3035

When they took back their catch across the plain,
 Their victims, wounded, drenched in blood, and slain,
 The wolf and fox then waited eagerly,
 Hoping to see the catch shared equally.
 The lion sensed that they'd grown covetous 3040
 And knew the basis of their lustfulness:
 Know that the lion of the mysteries—
 Whatever thoughts you have he clearly sees,
 Refrain distracted heart when he is near
 From bad thoughts, for to him they all are clear!
 He knows, but doesn't give you any clue,
 He wears a smile as mask and laughs with you.
 About their whisperings once he was aware;
 He thought he'd better guard against the pair:
 'T'll show you what you two have truly earned, 3045
 Beggarly misers, then you will have learned!
 For you, will my opinion then not do?
 Is this your measure of what I've shown you?
 Your own minds and opinions come from mine,
 My world-adorning gifts which are divine;
 The painting thanks its painter, as is fit,
 For thought and knowledge which he's granted it—
 Is your opinion of me then so low?
 Disgraces of the epoch, now I know!
*Those who think ill of God,** if I don't break 3050
 And chop their heads, then that is my mistake!
 I'll free the heavens from your vile disgrace
 So that your tale remains in this low place.'
 While thinking this he would smile all the while—
 Don't feel assured on seeing lions smile!
 Material wealth is like the smiles of God—
 It's made us drunk, conceited, prone to fraud;
 Becoming poor is best for you who're sure
 About wealth's worth—it soon sheds its allure.

*The lion tests the wolf saying, 'Come forward, wolf, divide
the prey among us!'*

The lion said, 'Decide each hunter's share 3055

So we can see, wolf, if you're truly fair;

In distribution be my deputy

Until your essence is made clear to me.'

He said, 'Dear king, the wild ox is for you

Since you are big, well-built, and powerful too;

The goat's mine, for its size is moderate;

Fox, take the hare and don't be obstinate!

The lion said, 'What talk I've listened to!

How dare you speak near me of "I" and "you"!

That wolf insulted me when it came near 3060

And saw itself still, though I have no peer.'

The lion roared, 'Come here, conceited ass!'

Then punched him down and slew him on the grass;

Not hearing true words in the things he'd said,

He flayed his skin and then chopped off his head!

'You saw me, but your self you failed to leave,

Your soul must die abased and none will grieve!

You failed to pass away before my face—

Breaking your neck was thus an act of grace!'

*All perishes** except His face, submit, 3065

Don't claim existence—you've no part of it!

To whomsoever in My face should die

The rule *All perishes* does not apply:

'*There is no*' for '*except*' he's left aside,*

Whoever's in '*except*'s' realm has not died,

And those who talk near him of 'I' and 'we'

Are not let in, thus drowned in vanity.

Story about the person who knocked on the door of his beloved, who asked him from inside, 'Who is it?' He replied 'It is I!' She responded, 'Since you are you, I won't open the door: I don't know any friend who is "I"—go away!'

A man knocked on his lover's door one day,
 'Who is it?' he heard his beloved say.
 He said, 'It's me.' She answered, 'Leave at once! 3070
 There isn't room for such raw arrogance.'
 Raw meat's cooked just by separation's flame—
 What else can cure hypocrisy's deep shame?
 He wandered off in pain as his heart burnt,
 In exile from the one for whom he yearned,
 Matured before then going back once more
 And walking to and fro outside her door.
 He tapped the door, now suffering nerves inside,
 Not to let slip a wrong word how he tried!
 His sweetheart then responded, asking who 3075
 Was at the door—he said, 'None, love, but you.'
 'Now you are I, please enter in this place
 Because for two I's here there isn't space.'
 A needle can't accommodate split thread,
 To enter thread must have a single head.
 To fit a needle thread is suitable,
 For camels, needle eyes are much too small!*

A camel's being must be cut to size
 With scissors of religious exercise—
 For that to work God's hand is necessary— 3080
 His '*Be!*'* solves each impossibility.
 With His hand everything is possible—
 Fear of Him tames each stubborn animal;
 He doesn't heal just lepers and the blind
 But he can raise the dead too you will find,
 And non-existents, more dead than the dead,
 Towards existence by His will are led.
 Recite, '*He works on something new each day*'*
 And never think He idles time away.

His least achievement daily is to send 3085
Three armies, each to a specific end:
One from men's loins to mothers has to go
So in their wombs they'll form an embryo;
One from the wombs towards the world outside—
Thus males and females have been multiplied;
One army's sent above straight from the earth
So all can see good actions have much worth—
This talk is endless, so come quickly here
To friends and followers who are sincere!

His sweetheart said, 'Come in, all of my heart, 3090
Not like the rose and thorn that are apart.'
Make fewer errors now there's just one thread—
If you see two, know there's just one ahead.
Just like a noose, '*Be!*'* draws you from a distance
And thus brings non-existence to existence,
Although in form the noose may look like two
There's just one rope and one thing it will do!
With pairs of legs all men must cross the street,
Two scissor-blades together cut one sheet;
Look at this pair of laundry-men, for instance, 3095
Between them there is obviously a difference:
One washed your clothes in water with some soap,
To dry the other hangs them on a rope,
But then the first one rinses them again
As though there is a fight between these men!
But these two who may seem to be apart
Both act and think as one—they're one at heart;
Each prophet and each saint has his own way,
But all lead to the One to whom they pray.
Sleep overcame the audience for a while, 3100
Water then bore their millstones for a mile—
This water comes from up beyond the mill,
For your sake it flows down here by God's will,
When you don't need to have mills any more
It then will flow above you as before.

To teach, this truthful speech comes to your tongue
 Or else to its own course it could have clung;
 It smoothly travels, so one wouldn't know,
 To gardens *under which the rivers flow*.*
 That place to my soul, God, won't you disclose 3105
 Where speech without a word is born and grows,
 So that the pure soul headlong then will race
 To non-existence's vast open space!
 A wide and vast realm of magnificence
 From which this false world gains its sustenance.
 Tighter than non-existence is thought's realm,
 That's why it causes griefs that overwhelm.
 Temporal existence is more cramped than thought,
 That's why the moon shrinks almost to a dot;
 The sensual world's more cramped than this as well, 3110
 It is the most restrictive prison cell.
 What makes it narrow? Multiplicity:
 Our senses drag us to plurality.
 Unity's not what senses can perceive—
 If that's your goal, then this realm you must leave;
 Though 'B' and 'e' formed it, 'Be!'^{*} was one act—
 The meaning was still pure and kept intact.
 Let's now return, though this is incomplete,
 To see what fate that old wolf had to meet.

*The lion teaches a lesson to the wolf who had shown
disrespect in his division*

That lion pulled apart the old wolf's head 3115
 To leave its wretched dualism dead—
So we took vengeance on them,* to be brief,
 When they were not effaced near their own chief—
 Then, to the fox the lion turned to say,
 'Divide this food up for us straight away!'
 The fox replied, 'This fat ox seems just right
 To be your breakfast, king—you have such might;
 And so the goat should be preserved till lunch—
 Something, victorious king, for you to munch;

Your supper's then the hare that's left behind — 3120
 An evening snack, king, since you are so kind.'
He said, 'Fox, justice is what you display,
 Who taught you how to share the spoils this way?
Where did you learn this, excellent dear friend?'
 'From witnessing the wolf's most tragic end!'
The lion said, 'You gambled all for me
 So you can go and take with you all three!
Since you've behaved entirely for my sake,
 If I harm you that would be my mistake.
I'm yours, and all the prey can be your prize, 3125
 Step on the seventh heaven as you rise!
You took heed from that base wolf that I slew,
 So, fox, you're now a lion in my view!'
The wise take heed from deaths of friends, so they
 Can sidestep tribulation in their way.
The fox gave thanks that he had been asked last,
 After the wolf's test had already passed:
'If he had summoned me here first and said,
 "Divide this up!" How could I then have fled?'
Praise be to God who made us too appear 3130
 After our predecessors have been here,
To hear of punishments that He'd decreed
 To those of them who failed then to take heed,
So trials of past wolves may cause alarm
 And like the fox we may escape from harm.
That's why the Prophet spoke so truthfully
 When calling us '*the blest community*'.
Look at the dead wolves' bones and fur, and then
 Consider this a warning, worthy men!
Existence and pretence the wise forget 3135
 On learning what the Aad and Pharaoh met,
If not their fates for other men one day
 Will be a warning not to go astray.

Noah threatens his people, 'Don't argue with me, for you'll be disobeying God by doing this, you abandoned men!'

'Stubborn fools, I am not I,' Noah said,

'Through God I live, through my own soul I'm dead:

I've died to human senses like the night

So God is now my hearing, food, and sight.

Since I'm not I, this breath's from Him as well,

He who himself breathes is an infidel!'

A lion's in the fox's form you see—

3140

Don't walk up to him so audaciously!

If you're not fooled by how he looks outside

You might then hear the lion's roar inside.

If Noah never had God's light within

How could he then have caused their world to spin?

A thousand lions in one frame of clay—

He was a fire, the world a stack of hay,

And since the stack did not give its tithe-share

A flame to burn the stack he lit in there.

Whoever like the wolf should dare to speak

3145

Before the hidden lion has a cheek—

Just like the wolf he'll be gulped with one bite,

'*We took revenge*,'* the lion will recite;

The lion's blows will thus make him succumb,

The one who's bold before him must be dumb!

If only just his body was attacked

So that his faith and heart could stay intact.

On reaching here, my strength has sapped away

So how can I reveal such truths today?

Think of your stomach as a worthless thing,

3150

In front of Him don't try such bargaining!

Submit in front of Him your 'I' and 'we'—

Give it to Him, for it's His property!

On this path, once you are a poor fakir

The lion and his prey are yours—it's clear!

That's all because He's pure and glorious
And has no need for what's superfluous;
So all the prey and every grace that's found
Straight to the servants of this King are bound—
He made all things, though He has no desire, 3155
Those who see this feel joy and may rise higher!
He made the two worlds, everything you see,
But still what use to Him is property!

So guard your hearts from every evil thought
When near Him, so to shame you won't be brought:
He can detect your thoughts and inner soul
Like hair which floats on milk inside your bowl;
The one whose breast from images is clean
Becomes a mirror too for what's unseen:
Without the need to think he reads your mind— 3160
*A mirror for believers** of this kind;
If he should test us, he would soon find out
Who's filled with certainty and who with doubt:
His soul's the touchstone for the coins we hold,
So he sees what's a heart and what's false gold.

*Kings seat Sufis in front of themselves so that their eyes
may become illumined by them*

The custom of the kings is as below,
You've heard of this, so really you should know:
Their warriors all stand on the left-hand side
Since their brave hearts are found that way inside;
The treasurer and scribes sit on the right 3165
Because that hand's the one they use to write;
Sufis are seated straight in front—their role
Is serving as the mirror of the soul:
They've cleansed their hearts through mystic meditation,
Pure forms now fill their mirror-hearts' reflection.

With righteous natures those who have been graced
 In front of them want mirrors to be placed:
 Beautiful faces want a mirror near—
 It shows *their hearts have goodness*,* scrapes them clear.

*A guest came to Joseph, and Joseph demanded
 a gift from him*

To truthful Joseph came from the world's end 3170
 To be his guest, a generous loving friend;
 They were so close in childhood that the pair
 Would often share the seat of one small chair.
 The friend asked of his brothers' jealousy,
 Joseph said, 'They were like a chain round me:
 The lion's not ashamed bound in a chain—
 About the Lord's decree I don't complain.'
 Although the lion's neck with chains is bound
 He rules all chain-makers that can be found.
 'In gaol and in the well, how were those days?' 3175
 'Just like the moon when in its waning phase.'
 Though when it wanes, it's seen to shrink and bend,
 Still it becomes a full moon in the end;
 In mortars, pearls are ground and mixed with kohl
 To grant sight to the eye inside the soul;
 If seeds are planted firmly in the ground,
 Wheat will eventually grow all around;
 Then in the mill they grind it to make bread—
 Its value soars now with it men are fed;
 Next by men's teeth the bread is ground again, 3180
 Life, wisdom, and intelligence they gain,
 And when in love that life becomes effaced
*Farmers rejoice** the seed's not gone to waste!
 This discourse could go on, so let's find out
 What that good friend and Joseph talked about.

Joseph, on telling his biography,
 Asked, 'Friend, what present have you brought for me?'
 Going empty-handed to a friend's worse still
 Than setting off without wheat to the mill,
 For at *the Gathering* God then will say, 3185
 'So where's your gift for *Resurrection Day*?*
Are you alone, without a present too,
In the same shape as I created you?*
 Or have you brought with you a souvenir,
 Knowing that you'd be resurrected here?
 Perhaps you thought you'd not reach home again,
 That promises about today were vain?'
 Deniers of this day have brains so numb
 That from His kitchen they won't gain a crumb!
 If you don't disbelieve, how can you go 3190
 To your friend empty-handed like a foe!
 Sleep less, reduce too the amount you eat,
 Take then a present when you're due to meet—
 Be of those who *sleep little when they sleep*,
 At dawn *seek his forgiveness*,* truly weep!
 Move just a little like a foetus, so
 The sense which sees the light He'll then bestow;
 And when you step outside this womb-like place
 You'll leave the world for a much wider space:
 They said, '*God's land is vast*,'* and thus they meant 3195
 The lofty realm of prophets He has sent;
 Hearts don't become depressed there, since they're free;
 You won't see shrivel up a fresh, young tree.
 The burden of your senses you now bear,
 You're weary, tired, and falling everywhere,
 But when you sleep you're carried off instead,
 Free then of tiredness, injury, and dread—
 Consider sleep's state just a little taste
 Of how the saints are borne when they're effaced:
 They are Companions of the Cave—you'll learn 3200
 That *they're asleep* although they stand and turn;
 Without them seeking it, He draws them there
First right, then left though they are unaware:

What is that *right side*? Proper and good action,
The left?* The body's own source of distraction;
 From all the prophets these two both flow out,
 Though they don't sense the echo of their shout:
 Echoes bring good and evil sounds to you
 Though mountains stay oblivious to these two.

*The guest says to Joseph, 'I've brought you a mirror, so that
 each time you look in it you'll see your own handsome
 face and remember me'*

Joseph asked, 'Where's the gift with which you came?' 3205

This question made his guest then moan with shame,
 He said, 'How many gifts I sought for you,

But none seemed worthy in my humble view:

How could I bring a nugget to the mine,

A single drop to a vast sea of wine?

I'm taking cumin to Kerman,* it's true,

By bringing here my heart and soul for you.

No seed is missing from the storehouse here

Except your perfect form which has no peer—

To bring a mirror thus appeared just right, 3210

One that's as radiant as your pure breast's light,

So you can see in it the face I love,

Just like the sun, that candle up above—

I've brought a mirror, so that when you see

Your handsome face you'll then remember me.'

He showed the mirror he'd kept by his side,

With mirrors good men are preoccupied;

Non-being serves as Being's mirror, friend,

So choose non-being if you comprehend:

In this way, Being will be clear to see, 3215

Like in the poor, when men give generously:

Food is the mirror of the hungry and

The tinder's mirror is the flame that's fanned;

Emptiness and non-being serve to show

The virtue of the crafts that skilled men know:

When garments are already so well sewn
How can they let the mender's skill be shown?
Tree trunks must be left for the carpenter
Untouched, so he can make some furniture;
The doctor who mends broken bones heads straight 3220
For that place where the injured men all wait:
If there's no casualty, who needs your aid?
Medicine's virtue can't then be displayed!
If copper's faults aren't plain for all to see
How can one tell the worth of alchemy?
Defects reflect perfection's purest light,
They mirror God's own glory and His might;
All things thus make their opposites appear—
In vinegar the taste of honey's clear.

Whoever recognizes his own faults 3225
Towards perfection rapidly then vaults,
But if you think you're perfect as you are,
You won't reach God for you have strayed too far—
Imagining you're perfect is the worst
Of faults, you show-off—learn this lesson first!
Much blood will flow out from your heart and eyes
Before your self-conceit completely dies;
Claiming, '*I'm better*'* was cursed Satan's error
And this same defect lies in every creature:
Although they like to show themselves as meek, 3230
There's dung beneath the surface—smell the reek!
When, as a test, the Lord should stir them round,
Their water then immediately is browned:
There's dung in your stream's bed that you've not seen,
And to your eyes the stream looks pure and clean!

The guide who's knowing has a special role—
To join streams to the Universal Soul,
The streams can't clean themselves—the point's been made
That from God's knowledge man receives much aid;

How can a sword carve its own hilt? You show 3235
 The surgeon wounds you've suffered from your foe;
 Flies gather on men's wounds, so none can see
 His own wound's putrid foulness normally—
 Such flies are fancies and possessions too,
 The wounds the dark states that emerge in you.
 The guide puts on your wound a salve to heal
 The pain and misery that you now feel—
 Don't think the pain's forever gone away,
 The salve has been sent down as just one ray!
 Don't turn away, fool, from this salve again, 3240
 Not you but that guide's ray has soothed the pain!

The one who wrote down the Prophet's revelation became an apostate because one ray of revelation came down to him; and he recited the verse before the Prophet, and then said, 'So I too am a recipient of revelation'

There was a scribe before Osman who'd write
 With care the words the Prophet would recite:*
 When holy revelation he'd dictate,
 This scribe would write it on a leaf or slate;
 A ray of revelation shone his way
 So he found wisdom in himself that day,
 The Prophet was that piece of wisdom's source
 But this scrap led that meddling fool off course:
 'The truths God's messenger likes to impart 3245
 I now hold in the depths of my own heart.'
 The Prophet sensed what this misled scribe thought
 And so God's wrath to this man's soul was brought;
 His job and faith he then chose to forgo
 And out of spite became the Prophet's foe.
 The Prophet said, 'You stubborn infidel,
 You're dark—how can you be light's source as well!
 If you were a sweet fountain that's divine,
 You wouldn't have produced such filthy brine.'

His reputation to preserve from harm 3250

He kept his mouth shut, though he wasn't calm—

He burnt inside because of this event

Though still he felt unable to repent.

He sighed, but this did not help him—instead

The sword was drawn to sever off his head.

God's made your reputation a huge weight,

Too many find this out once it's too late!

For unbelief and pride have blocked the way—

No one can even sigh once in dismay:

'*Shackled, they must keep their heads up,*' God said, 3255

Not outer shackles, but inside instead;

'*Behind a barrier, and above a screen,*'*

So obstacles around them can't be seen;

This barrier looks like space that's vast and free—

Men cannot tell the dam of destiny!

You're your own obstacle to His fine face

And to speech filled with the divine guide's grace.

Though many infidels desired religion

They were still trapped by pride and reputation—

This chain's much harder than those men have made; 3260

Those chains are broken by an axe's blade

And they can be released quite easily,

While from this hidden chain no man gets free.

If men fall victim to a wasp's sting, then

Their natural defence heals them again,

But since this sting is from your being, friend,

The pain's much more intense and it won't end!

The explanation's bursting from my breast,

I fear though that it might leave you depressed—

Don't you despair! Learn to live joyfully, 3265

And cry for help—He answers every plea!

Pray: 'O Forgiving Lord, forgive us please,

Doctor who treats the pain of our disease!'

Wisdom's reflection ruined one who knew—

Don't let such vile conceit destroy you too!

Brother, true wisdom to you has been sent
 From God's élite saints, but it's only lent:
 Inside, a house may look so warm and bright,
 The neighbouring house though has bestowed this light—
 Give thanks, don't raise your nose in arrogance! 3270
 Shun self-conceit, don't live in ignorance!
 It's sad this borrowed state we have today
 Has led men so far from the proper way;
 I'm the slave of the one who at each stage
 Does not claim he's enlightened as a sage:
 From many stages travellers must ascend
 Until one day they reach the journey's end.
 Iron's not red, in fire though red it turns
 Due to the heat of flames in which it burns;
 A window may fill up your house with light, 3275
 That's not the light's source though—adjust your sight!
 Each door and wall may say, 'I am the source;
 I don't bear others' light—it's mine of course!'

The sun will counter, 'Errant fool, wait here,
 And when I set, the truth will then be clear!'

Plants say, 'We by ourselves turn fresh and green,
 As beautiful and joyful thus we're seen.'
 But summer answers, 'Listen everyone—
 Just take a look in autumn when I'm done!'

The body shows off its own handsome face, 3280
 While spirit, which is blessed with wings of grace,
 Shouts, 'Cesspool, you live just one or two days
 All thanks to my life-giving, pure light rays!
 This huge world can't contain your vanity,
 Just wait until from you I finally flee!
 Your mourners will then dig a grave for you
 So you can feed the worms and insects too!
 That one who in your presence swooned and fell
 Will hold his nose because of your foul smell!'

The spirit's rays give hearing, speech, and sight 3285
 As water boils due to the fire we light;
 Just as the body's fed rays from the soul
 Your soul's fed by God's friends who play this role.

When from the soul His spirit should depart
It's like a soulless body, stripped of heart.
I lay my head down on the ground this way
So earth will vouch for me on Judgment Day,
On that day when *it will be forced to quake*
The role of witness then the earth will take,
For what it knows *it will say publicly*,* 3290
And earth and rocks will talk miraculously.
Philosophers doubt, for they're logical—
Tell them to slam their heads on a brick wall!
For water, earth, and clay speak, and each word
By Sufi mystics is quite clearly heard;
Philosophers doubt moaning pillars too—
About the saints' perception they've no clue,
Saying, 'These men must be moved by emotions
To have such fantasies and foolish notions.'
Their infidelity and vile corruption 3295
Has filled them with vain thoughts—they choose rejection;
When they deny that demons can exist,
They're mocked by those same demons they've dismissed!
You've not seen one? Look at yourself instead!
Only a madman boasts a swollen head!
Each man whose heart is filled with stress and doubt
Is a philosopher who's not come out:
He utters true belief, but all the same
This man's philosophy still earns him shame;
Take care, believers, it's inside of you, 3300
And there are many endless worlds there too.
The warring sects are also there within,
Woe to you, friend, if one day they should win!
Those having the essentials of belief
In fear of this are shaking like a leaf.

You laughed at Satan and the demons then,
Judging yourselves, in contrast, virtuous men;
When men's souls turn their jackets inside out,
How many Muslims in distress will shout:

The store's gold-plated things all feel delight 3305
 Because the touchstone is now far from sight,
 'Don't lift the veil, don't make faults manifest,
 Concealing Lord, when we're put to the test!
 False gold can lie with real gold through the night,
 Though real gold's waiting for the dawn's first light;
 Gold says by means of its own inner state:
 'Daybreak will show the truth, fake, you just wait!
 Accursed Satan for millennia
 Led faithful saints as their superior,
 But then he fought with Adam out of pride 3310
 And was disgraced like dung that's thrown aside.

*Bal'am, son of Ba'ur, prayed, 'Make Moses and his people turn
 back from this town which they have besieged without
 achieving their goal!' It was answered*

To Bal'am men were subject at one stage
 For he was then the Jesus of his age,
 To no one else would they bow down, his spell
 Could make those terminally ill get well;
 He fought with Moses out of self-conceit,
 You've heard, I'm sure, the fate that he would meet,
 For Bal'am, Satan, and the others too,
 Met such sad ends, unseen and in plain view.
 God made these two notorious as a test, 3315
 As an example to warn off the rest:
 He hanged these two thieves in the public square,
 So thieves who earn such wrath might then be rare.
 He brought their banners back, victorious—
 Those slaughtered by His wrath are numerous!
 When you keep in your bounds, to God you're dear;
 Don't overstep the mark! Is that quite clear!
 For if you strike one whom God loves still more,
 You'll be sent to the earth's most rotten core.
 What have you learned from Thamud and from Aad*? 3320
 Their tales show prophets are all loved by God:

Quakes, thunderbolts, and stones all played a role
To show the strength of the prophetic soul.

For men's sake kill all animals, and then
For intellect's come back and kill all men!
What's intellect here? Wisdom's perfect source,
Not wretched human intellect, of course;
All animals are thus inferior
To Man who is through this superior,
Thus for mankind to take their lives is lawful 3325
Since beasts lack intellect that's universal.
Wild men were dealt a massive fall from grace
Because they dared oppose the human race.
What honour will remain for you my friend—
When you're *wild, frightened asses** in the end?
Don't kill an ass if it's of benefit
But if it's wild you're free to slaughter it:
Though ignorance is what the ass might plead
God won't forgive its failure to take heed.
When someone shuns truth's breath, don't say he can 3330
Be still excused unlike the ass, good man:
It's lawful to take unbelievers' lives
Like beasts, with arrows, spears, and hunting knives!
The same goes for their families, you know,
For they lack wisdom and they're mean and low—
From truth the ones who turn away and flee
Are soon reduced to animality.

*The angels Harut and Marut relied on their own immaculateness
and wanted to lead the people of the world, but they fell
into temptation*

Harut and Marut, angels up on high,
Pride's poisoned arrow also caused to die,
Because they had become self-satisfied: 3335
Two beasts defied a lion and then died—

Even if they had used their horns with skill,
 He would have ripped them up in pieces still,
 With horns all over, just like porcupines,
 He would have killed them, still unharmed by spines.
 Although strong winds uproot the tallest trees,
 They beautify moist grass just like a breeze;
 That fierce wind pities weak grass mercifully—
 Don't show off all your strength conceitedly!
 An axe does not fear branches of the tree
 But chops them up in bits quite easily;
 Still at a flimsy leaf it never swings—
 The axe's blade chops only solid things.
 Do flames care that the firewood's layered so deep?
 Do butchers ever run away from sheep?
 What's form next to Reality? So small!
 What makes the heavens hang above us all?
 In water-wheels the answer can be found—
 What is the force that makes them spin around?
 Your shield-like bodies' motions all begin
 Deep in the hidden spirit that's within;
 The motion of the wind when it should blow
 Is like this wheel moved by the water's flow:
 Where is each breath, each ebb and flow, then from?
 Straight from the soul full of desire they've come;
 It makes the letters: J, I, H, A, D.
 Now it makes peace, then war and enmity;
 It drags things right, then pulls them left in tow,
 Now rose bushes, then thorns, are made to grow.
 In this way wind was once transformed by God
 Into a dragon to confront the Aad,
 Then for believers wind was forced to be
 Their peace, protection, and security.
 'Reality is God,' said one who knew,
 'Lord of the worlds, sea of all meaning too.'
 All levels up in heaven and on earth
 Are flotsam on the sea—they have no worth;
 The twigs there dance and jiggle with the tide
 Whenever there is turbulence inside,

3340

3345

3350

So then to make the twigs stay still once more 3355
The sea will throw them all out on the shore,
Though when its surge absorbs them, in a flash
It does what fire does to turn wood to ash—
This topic's endless so let's now return,
Harut and Marut's bitter fate to learn.

*The remainder of the story of Harut and Marut; their punishment
in this world inside the pit of Babylon*

Since the depravity of people here
To both of them had started to be clear,
They waved their fists in anger at mankind
While to their own shortcomings they were blind;
One saw his ugly features in the mirror, 3360
Then turned away from it, enraged and bitter:
Conceited men see other people's sin,
A fire from hell then flares up deep within.
'Protection of the faith' they call this pride,
Their infidel self-love dictates inside!
The true protector of the faith I've seen,
He's different, he makes things fresh and green.
'If you're enlightened,' God then told the pair,
'At heedless evildoers' deeds don't stare!
Give thanks, my angel-servants, that you're free 3365
From bonds of lust and sexuality—
If I had given you those kinds of states,
The heavens wouldn't let you in their gates,
The chastity that your forms both possess
Shows my affection and immaculateness—
Consider me and not yourself the source,
Don't you succumb to that cursed devil's force!

That one who for the Prophet used to write
Saw in himself God's wisdom and His light,
He thought he must himself be God's apostle, 3370
But was a fake just like a hunter's whistle.

The songs of birds you cleverly can name,
 But do you know the songbirds' actual aim?
 You've heard the singing of the nightingale,
 Not knowing love, its form's of no avail;
 If you do know, it's guesswork anyway —
 The way the deaf must lip-read what men say.

A deaf man went to visit his sick neighbour

A partially deaf man heard someone say
 That his own neighbour had got sick that day,
 He thought, 'I'm deaf—what will I comprehend 3375
 Of sentiments expressed by my sick friend,
 For he's now ill and might have lost his voice?
 But I'm obliged to go, I have no choice.
 When I see this friend's lips move, then I'll guess
 The sentiments he's trying to express:
 When I ask him, 'How are you, dearest friend?'
 He'll say, 'Alright', or 'I am on the mend.'
 I'll ask, 'What have you had for lunch today?'
 'Some bean soup and some tonic,' he will say,
 'To health!' I'll say. 'To whom do you now go 3380
 For treatment?' He'll say, 'Doctor so-and-so',
 I'll say, 'He's very talented and blessed
 So everything will turn out for the best;
 I've seen myself his power and skilfulness,
 Whatever he's tried he has met success.'
 He thus rehearsed such comments in his head,
 Then went to see his sick friend in his bed:
 'How are you?'—'Almost dead!'—'The Lord be praised!'
 The sick friend grew offended and amazed,
 Thinking, 'Praise God? Does this man want a fight?' 3385
 The deaf man's guesses hadn't turned out right!
 He asked, 'What have you had?'—'A poisonous drink!'
 He said, 'To health!'—The sick man reached the brink.
 The deaf man asked 'Which doctor's coming then
 To treat you so that you'll feel well again?'

'The Angel of Death—so just go away!'

The deaf man said, 'Rejoice! He'll save the day!'

His visitor left, thinking this inside:

'Thank God I came!' He was self-satisfied.

The sick man thought, 'He's my worst enemy;

3390

I never knew he could act spitefully!'

He then thought of expletives in his mind

To write to him swear words of every kind!

When someone swallows soup that has turned bad,

He soon feels ill and vomits what he's had:

*Suppress your rage,** don't spew it out like this!

You'll be rewarded with the sweetest bliss.

He had no patience, so he grew irate,

Saying, 'Where are you, bastard? You just wait!

I'll ram your words back down your throat again,

3395

My lion-like consciousness was sleeping then.

Visiting sick men is to bring relief,

Not to antagonize and pile on grief;

You wanted just to see your foe distressed

So that your filthy mind could find some rest.'

In acts of worship many go astray

With thoughts of their rewards on Judgment Day.

Truly, their worship's just sin in disguise

Although their vileness seems pure to your eyes.

The deaf man thought he'd done a righteous act

3400

But it led to the opposite in fact,

Content, he thought, 'I did well, I feel thrilled!

My duty to my neighbour I've fulfilled.'

But as we've seen a fire was made to start—

He burnt himself thus in his sick friend's heart:

Beware of ever kindling such a fire,

The sum of all your sins will just rise higher!

The Prophet told pretentious men one day,

'Repeat your prayers—you didn't truly pray!'

Our remedy for such pretentiousness

3405

Is begging Him in every prayer '*Guide us!**

Dear God, don't mix this prayer of ours today

With those of show-offs who have gone astray!'

Due to the reasoning this deaf man applied
 His ten-year friendship with his neighbour died.
 Your temporal reasoning's powers are unfit
 For revelation, which is infinite,
 For if your ears still savour every word,
 This means your inner ear has still not heard.

*The first person to apply analogical reasoning to
 revelation was Satan*

Analogy and logic was used first 3410
 Before God's light by Satan, who was cursed:
 'Mere clay's not worth as much as fire,' he'd say,
 'I'm made of fire while Man's just made of clay;
 And judging just by origins, it's right
 To say he's darkness while I'm radiant light.'
 'There shall be no more kinship then'* God said;
 Struggle and piety earns grace instead—
 Since it's beyond the world that's temporal,
 Kinship can't win you what is spiritual;
 This heritage is from God's messengers, 3415
 Souls of the pure are sole inheritors,
 Bu Jahl's son found true faith a later day
 While Noah's son joined up with those astray:*
 The earthling turns just like a moon, so bright,
 You're made of fire and dark with shame like night.
 At night, by reasoning and by calculation
 Scholars work out the qebla's* right location,
 But when by day the Kaaba is in sight
 To make such calculations isn't right—
 Don't claim you still can't see, or turn away 3420
 Due to your reasoning—*God knows best the way!*
 If you should hear a message from God's bird,*
 As an example you would learn that word,
 Then you'd apply to it your reasoning
 To make from just one thought a concrete thing.
 But those expressions God's élite saints say
 Are far beyond what language can convey:

Although you learn *the bird's tongue* through one sound
And through analogies that can be found,
You injure saints' hearts like that poor sick friend 3425
And, like the deaf man, think you comprehend.
The Prophet's scribe, on hearing from that bird,
Thought he was that bird's equal since he'd heard,
The bird then blinded him and flapped a wing
To shove him down death's well of suffering.

By thoughts or what reflects from revelations
Don't fall back down from heaven's lofty stations,
Harut and Marut though you be, or more
Than *those who stand in ranks** outside His door.
Have mercy on bad people's wickedness, 3430
And curse instead your own self-centredness!
Beware lest God's possessiveness should hit
And make you fall head-first inside earth's pit!
Both said, 'God, Yours is the command, for sure,
Without your care how can one feel secure?'
This pair of angels hadn't understood:
'How can our deeds be bad when we are good?'
The pair's distracting itch would not subside
Until it sowed the seed of selfish pride.
They then said, 'Foolish, base humanity 3435
Knows not of spiritual kings' purity;
We'll draw the curtains over all the sky
Then land on earth and raise a screen so high,
To grant all justice and bring worship's light,
While flying home to heaven every night,
So that as wonders of the age we'll be
Renowned for bringing earth security.'
This view of earth and heaven isn't right,
There's something missing here that's kept from sight.

An explanation of why one must keep one's own mystical state and intoxication hidden from the ignorant

Listen to what Hakim Sana'i said: 3440

 'Rest where you drank the wine your drunken head!'

For from the tavern if a drunk should stray

 He'll seem a clown with whom the children play:

He'll tumble into puddles everywhere

 And all the wretches will laugh, point, and stare;

They'll follow him because he's strange and new

 Although of drunkenness they have no clue.

Except those drunk in God, men are just boys,

 Mature men flee their passions and their toys:

God said, 'The world is just a toy, and you 3445

 Are merely children'*—what God says is true!

You keep on bringing toys down from the shelf—

 You won't gain wisdom till you slay your self!

Lust here's like infants having sex, my friend,

 Compared with what's there at the other end:

What's infant sex? Play-acting that brings laughter

 Compared with sex by Rostam or a martyr;

The wars of men are like an infant's fight

 Meaningless, senseless, base, without real might:

They brandish wooden swords and then take aim, 3450

 But there's no point or meaning to their game:

They ride a length of wood just like at school,

 Saying, 'Here's Boraq, and here's the Prophet's mule!'

They carry it themselves, but stupidly

 They think they're being borne majestically—

Wait till the day those borne by God should race

 Beyond the nine-tiered heavens at great pace:

*Spirits and angels to Him will ascend**—

And make the heavens shake from end to end.

Children, you ride your skirts and run the course, 3455

 Clutching the hem to make it seem a horse,

Opinion does not free you from all need—*

You won't reach heaven on your reasoning's steed:

Relying on the stronger point of view

Don't doubt the sun when it's in front of you!

It's time now to look down at your own steed—

You've made it from your own two feet, take heed!

Your every feeling, fancy, sense, and care

Is like the children's wooden horse, beware!

Knowledge of mystics was the steed they rode, 3460

Knowledge of sensual men an extra load.

Heart knowledge helps you when it fills you there,

But other knowledge is a cross to bear:

'Like asses carrying their books,' God said,*

Knowledge that's not from Him wears down your head!

It has no meaning—shell without a core,

It doesn't last, like make-up on a whore!

But when you bear the burden well, it will

Be taken off and you'll feel such a thrill,

So don't bear knowledge for your own sake, friend, 3465

And you'll find inner knowledge in the end—

Then you may ride on knowledge's fast steed

And watch the load fall off and your soul freed.

If you don't chant 'He' how can you then flee

Your own desire? Transcend the mere name 'He'!*

A thought's produced by attribute and name,

This thought's a guide with union as its aim;

A guide without an aim does not exist,

If there were no path, ghouls would not persist:

Do names not tell of a reality? 3470

Can roses grow from R, O, S, and E?

You've said the name, to find the named now try—

The moon's not on the lake but in the sky!

Mere names and words if you wish to transcend

Then purify yourself of self, my friend!

Like iron give up your original colour,

Through discipline become the clearest mirror!

Thus purge yourself of attributes to view
 Your own pure essence lying inside you!
 Within your heart you'll find the Prophet's knowledge 3475
 Without a book or teachers from the college:
 The Prophet said, 'There are some in my nation
 Who share my essence and my aspiration;
 The same as me; they see me by that light
 With which I also see them day and night,
 Without *hadiths* and their transmitters too
 Water of Life* they drink to know it's true.'
 So understand '*Last night I was a Kurd,*
Now I'm an Arab though'*—it's not absurd!
 A parable which shows the mysteries 3480
 Is this about the Greeks and the Chinese:

*The story about the competition between the Greeks and
the Chinese in the art of painting and portraiture*

Once the Chinese said, 'At art we're the best!
 The Greeks said, 'With more talent we've been blessed!
 The sultan said, 'I'll set a test for you
 To see which of your claims is really true.'
 They all prepared to paint a room's interior,
 In knowledge though the Greeks were far superior.
 'Come, show us to a room,' said the Chinese,
 'And give the Greeks one similar to it, please.'
 They found adjoining rooms which formed a pair, 3485
 One half for each group, thus completely fair;
 Then the Chinese requested lots of paint,
 The king supplied them, generous as a saint:
 Each dawn from his own storehouse men would bring
 More paint for them as gifts from this kind king.
 The Greeks said, 'Colourful paints will not prove
 Successful—colour's what we must remove!
 They closed their space off, polished every wall
 Clear as the heavens up above us all;

Colour to colourlessness can change quite soon, 3490

Colour's a cloud, colourlessness the moon;

If in the clouds some radiance should appear,

It's from the sun and moon that it shines here.

Once the Chinese felt their work was complete

They banged their drums to celebrate this feat,

The king arrived and saw such paintings there

That stunned him, for their beauty was so rare;

Then he went to the Greeks, who quickly raised

The screen in front and left him more amazed:

The image of that work which was so fine 3495

Reflected on the walls that they'd made shine—

Whatever he'd seen there shone on each wall,

Out of their sockets eyes began to fall!

The Greeks stand for the Sufis clearly:

Without techniques from books of theory,

They've cleansed their breasts so well that they shine bright

Free from all stinginess, desire, and spite.

The heart's a mirror with such purity

It can reflect forms from eternity:

Such a pure image, boundless, unlike art, 3500

Shone through the hand of Moses* from his heart;

These forms the heavens even can't contain,

Nor throne, nor ocean, nor an open plain,

For they're all numbered and delimited,

While hearts are one and they're unlimited—

The brain falls silent here or goes astray:

The heart's with God, or is God in some way.

No form's reflection shines eternally

But through the heart, home of infinity,

For every image which should reach this place 3505

Appears without a veil across its face.

Polishers fled all colours, so they could

Each breath see what is beautiful and good:

Beyond the husk of knowledge they can see,

They've raised the banner of true certainty,

All thought has left them, for they've seen the light,
 The sea's depths and their breasts they keep in sight.
 Of death all other men are running scared,
 To mock and laugh at it these men have dared,
 To conquer their hearts there's no hope in hell— 3510
 The pearl is not harmed, only its mere shell;
 Transcending grammar, law, theology,
 They've chosen self-effacement, poverty,
 When images from heaven shone to earth
 Their hearts received them, and they knew their worth;
 Their place is loftier even than God's Throne,
 God's *Seat of Certainty** they've made their own.

*The Prophet asks Zayd, 'How are you today, how have
 you risen from bed?' He answers, 'I've woken up a
 believer, Messenger of God'**

One dawn the Prophet turned to Zayd to say,
 'My friend, how have you woken up today?'
 'Like a believing slave who knows what's true.' 3515
 'Then where's faith's garden's sign displayed on you?'
 'I thirst,' said Zayd 'And wander in the day,
 At night I can't sleep—love burns me away:
 I've passed beyond both day and nighttime's sphere—
 They're shields I've penetrated like a spear.'
 Beyond there's just one army with one name,
 A thousand years and one hour are the same,
 There pre- and post-eternity have merged,
 The brain can't reach there, it soon gets submerged.
 The Prophet asked Zayd, 'Where's your souvenir? 3520
 Present some knowledge suitable for here.'
 Zayd said, 'While other people see the sky,
 I see God's throne with those who live on high,
 The seven hells and the eight heavens too
 Are visible to me—I swear it's true!
 I recognize each individual
 Like wheat and barley piled up at the mill:

Who's heaven-bound and who in hell will bake
I see just like a fish next to a snake.'

It has now been revealed like dawn's first light 3525

*The day their faces will turn black or white.**

However many faults the soul then had,

Inside its womb* none knew that it was bad:

The damned are damned inside the womb, that's why

*Their states some outwardly identify.**

The body's pregnant with the soul till death,

When birth pains make her writhe and gasp for breath,

The souls of all the dead now watch and wait

To see the way it's born and its new state:

The Africans will claim, 'This soul is ours!' 3530

The Greeks, 'No, he looks glorious, with great powers!'

It's now born in the realm of souls and grace,

The blacks and whites are equal in this place;

If he's been bad, by bad men he'll be led,

If good, he'll join the good up there instead;

Until it's born it's hidden from men's eyes,

Unborn souls so few men can recognize—

It's *by the Light of God** that such men see

Straight through a person's skin so easily.

Sperm's essence is pure goodness like the light, 3535

Beyond the realm of what is black or white;

*Of those of highest stature** He'll bestow

Colour to half, to banish them below.

This topic's incomplete, but it's now late,

If we're not back the caravan won't wait.

The day they will turn black or white we'll learn,

The Turks from Indians then we can discern;*

Inside the womb no man can separate

The two, but once they're born one's vile, one great.

'As if it is already Judgment Day,

3540

I see through men and women here today—

Shall I stay silent or share one more sign?’

The Prophet bit his lips, ‘This much is fine.’

‘O Messenger of God, shall I now mention

To all the secret of the Resurrection?*

Let me tear open this last veil of mine

And like the sun let my true essence shine,

Such that the sun will be eclipsed by me,

Marking the date-palm from the fruitless tree,

For Resurrection’s secret I’ll disclose—

3545

Real gold from false, so everybody knows.

With hands cut off, the damned all men will see

Distant from our pure Muslim family,

I’ll make hypocrisy’s worst failings plain

In moonlight, which won’t be eclipsed or wane,

The ragged clothes of damned men I’ll display

And make the Prophet’s drums be heard today,

Heaven and hell, the realm between as well,

I’ll show so clearly to each infidel,

A turbulent Kawsar* I’ll make appear

3550

To splash their faces and ring in each ear,

The thirsty who keep circling it I’ll show

This very moment, so all men will know;

Their shoulders rub against mine and their screams

Keep ringing in my ears, or so it seems,

While willingly in heaven filled with grace

They pull each other close in an embrace—

They take each other’s hands with gentle grips

And snatch some kisses from each other’s lips;

This ear of mine’s been deafened by their sighs

3555

And all the damned ones’ bitter grieving cries—

From hidden depths mere hints I now relate,

For fear, dear Prophet, you might grow irate.’

He spoke thus—drunken, wasted, almost dead,

The Prophet curled his collar up and said,

‘Your horse has grown excited, pull the reins!

*God feels no shame,** in you now none remains.

Your mirror has slipped out of its own cover,

But with Truth’s weighing-scales can it now differ?

How can they both keep silent out of tact,
So as to not shame someone with a fact?
They are both touchstones which speak truthfully:
Though you should serve them for a century
And say, "Conceal truth for my benefit:
Display the profit, hide the deficit!"
"Don't make yourself look stupid!" they will cry,
"Just for your sake can scales and mirrors lie?
Since God has made us for this aim alone:
That through us both the truth can be made known,
If we don't do exactly as we should, 3565
We won't be worthy for the fair and good."
So put the mirror back, Zayd, in its case,
Your breast's been split like Sinai by God's face!
'The sun of truth and pre-eternity
Can't be stuffed in one's arms so none can see:
It would tear off that arm which tries to hide,
Wisdom and madness would be nullified.'
The Prophet said, 'Place fingers on your eyes
And you won't see the sun begin to rise,
One fingertip can veil the moon at night— 3570
This is a sign God can conceal from sight:
The world gets covered by a single tip,
The sun can be eclipsed by just one slip.'

Keep quiet, watch the sea's depths if you can,
God's made that subject to the will of man
Like Salsabil and Zanjabil*—both springs
Are ruled in heaven by the King of Kings;
And heaven's streams are ruled by you and me,
Not forcefully but through the Lord's decree:
We make them flow where we want them to go 3575
Like magic at a good magician's show,
And, like my eyes' streams, they're in firm control
Of what sends out the tears—my heart and soul;
If the heart wants, they'll flow towards a snake,
Or a much better route instead they'll take,

Or if it wants—to what's perceivable,
 Or to veiled things that are invisible,
 Or if it wants—towards the Universal,
 Or to contingents that are only temporal.
 All outward senses are in flow this way, 3580
 The heart's decree these five pipes must obey:
 When your heart tells them what it has in mind
 All five set off and drag their skirts behind,
 Your hands and feet obey your heart's command
 Like Moses's rod, held in his right hand:
 If it's the heart's wish, legs will dance for it
 Or flee from loss to greater benefit,
 And hands will bend their fingers to hold tight
 A pen with which a book you then can write—
 Hands are controlled by one unseen inside, 3585
 Which has arranged the body's form outside—
 You'll be a snake against your enemy
 Or help your friend, if that's the heart's decree;
 Or to a spoon with which to eat you'll turn,
 Or to a massive mace that weighs a ton.
 How does the heart instruct them? How amazing!
 This marvellous, hidden link we're contemplating!
 Perhaps King Solomon's ring* it can gain,
 The outward senses' yearning to restrain?
 The outward senses it controls with ease, 3590
 The inward ones too follow its decrees;
 There are ten senses, seven organs too—
 Try counting what no words can show to you!
 Since you're like Solomon, heart, come and fling
 On angels and the demons your famed ring;
 If you're free from deceit here in this land,
 No demon then can steal it from your hand;
 The universe will be ruled by your name
 The way you rule your body, just the same.
 But if a demon steals the seal from you, 3595
 Your kingdom will be gone, your fortune too,
 Then misery will be your destiny
 Till *Judgment Day* as part of God's decree—

Though you deny your own deceit, my brother,
Your soul won't be saved from the scales and mirror.

*His fellow servants accuse Loqman of eating the fresh fruit
that they were supposed to bring home*

Loqman used to be in his master's eyes,
In outward form, the servant he'd despise;
The master sent some servants out one day
To gather fruit for him from far away.
The others thought Loqman embarrassing— 3600
He was dark-skinned though mystically a king—
And so they ate the fruit with such delight,
Led by their greed, although they had no right;
When they returned they gave Loqman the blame;
Their master cursed him with his eyes aflame!
To make him check the cause he answered back,
Loqman turned to him after his attack:
'Dear master, God has often made it clear
The faithless slave is not one He holds dear;
Examine who is faithful and who's not: 3605
Make everyone drink water that is hot,
Then make us run out in the countryside
On foot, while you are riding at our side—
You'll witness who has acted wickedly,
This will reveal the hidden mystery.'
The master poured hot water in each cup
And made each servant drink his last drop up,
He sent them out then to the yard, where they
Were forced to run this way and then that way;
They vomited once they had run about: 3610
Hot water made them spew their food all out,
But when Loqman's turn came, since he'd not lied,
Water is all he brought up from inside—
He'd shown such wisdom though a simple man,
Imagine what *the Lord of Being* can:
*That day when all the secrets are revealed**
What you would like to hide can't be concealed;

*Draughts of hot water that for each are poured**
Will tear all veils away from what's abhorred;
 Vile infidels fire's torture suits the best, 3615
 Since for hard stones fire is the perfect test:
 When to the stony-hearted we've been good
 And gently talked, they've shunned our brotherhood;
 A heavy wound needs treatment that is strong—
 To hungry dogs the donkey's bones belong:
*Bad women to the bad men** now dictate—
 An ugly woman is a vile man's mate;
 Whichever mate fulfils your fantasies—
 Become effaced in that one's qualities:
 If you want light, reflect it like a star, 3620
 If distance, be self-centred and stray far;
 If from this vile gaol you long to be free
*Prostrate before him, move near constantly!**

*The remainder of the story of Zayd answering the
 Messenger of God*

'Zayd, none can venture to its furthest reach—
 Now shackle the Boraq* which brings your speech!
 Such talk can tear apart the veil between
 This world, with all its faults, and the unseen;
 God's wish is to stay hidden still today,
 So drive the drummer off and bar the way!
 He's best left veiled, so draw the reins, sit tight! 3625
 In mental images let men delight.'
 The Lord wants even those who're in despair
 To worship Him and never turn from there,
 With just the hope that they may gain His grace
 Their goal for several days these men will chase.
 On all of us He wants his grace to shine:
 The good and bad receive grace that's divine;
 God wants each prince and prisoner in his cell
 To hope and fear and to beware as well;
 This hope and fear are just component parts 3630
 Of the thick veil that's covering their hearts—

Where's hope and fear when you're beyond the screen,
Might and strong rule await in the unseen.
A youth sat by a stream once with this thought:
 'That fisherman is Solomon, is he not?
If so, why's he alone and in disguise?
 If not, why does he seem so to my eyes?'
Like this, in two minds, he was wondering
 Till Solomon emerged as their own king;
From his great kingdom then the devil fled, 3635
 Solomon's fortune's sword left him for dead,
For he wore on his finger the famed ring;
 Devils and fairies were seen gathering,
Men came as well in order just to see,
 Including that youth with the fantasy—
Once he had seen the ring that his king wore,
 This wiped out what he'd thought about before.
We have such doubts when something is not here,
 We guess the qebla* when it is unclear,
Thoughts of the one who's absent fill one's breast, 3640
 But when he's present they are laid to rest;
And if the radiant sky does not lack rain,
 Plants keep on growing in the fertile plain.
*Believers in what is unseen** to be,
 Shutter the windows of the world you see.
If I should split the sky now in plain view,
 How can I ask, '*Does it look cracked to you?*'*
To find the qebla in the dark men face
 All angles, each from his own starting-place.
Things seem reversed like this for a short time: 3645
 The thief will try the judge now for a crime,
The sultans and high-ranking men as well
 Are slaves of their own servants for a spell.
Serving in absence is so laudable
 Like keeping faith in what's invisible,
For those who praise the king while in his presence
 Fall short still of those humble in his absence:
The governor at the empire's furthest end,
 Far from the capital, will still not bend;

He guards his garrison from enemies 3650
 And won't sell out for treasures vast as seas—
 Out on the furthest frontier, far away,
 He's loyal like those with the king today;
 He's better in the king's own eyes than those
 Who sacrifice themselves just when he knows:
 Fulfilling one small duty thus in absence
 Is better than a thousand in his presence:
 Faith and obedience, though now praiseworthy,
 Become void after death when truth you'll see.
 Since absent and veiled things thus seem the best, 3655
 Seal up your lips—don't make things manifest!
 Brother, refrain from talking! Don't you know
 Much hidden knowledge God will soon bestow;
 The sun's best witness is its own bright face:
 Who's the best witness? God, in every case!
 No! I will speak, since God, the angels too,
 And others who know are all telling you—
God, angels, and those who have certainty,
God is the one who lives eternally.
 But who are angels when God's testified 3660
 To also now bear witness on his side!
 Weak eyes and hearts don't have the strength to bear
 The radiant presence of the sun up there,
 They're just like bats that cannot bear the sun
 And so they give up hope it can be done;
 The angels help us, so please realize
 They manifest the sun's rays in the skies;
 We've gained this radiance from the sun, so we
 Share it with weak men like a deputy.
 Like different phases of the moon at night 3665
 Each angel has its own true worth and might
And different wings of light—some four, some three—*
 Each angel to a different degree,
 Just like the human intellect's own wings,
 From those of fools to those of learned kings.
 Each has an angel as associate,
 The one that is the most appropriate,

The blind can't bear a single solar ray,
So stars serve as the lamps to show the way.

*The Prophet tells Zayd, 'Don't divulge this secret further
than this—be sure to comply!'*

'My followers are stars,'* the Prophet said, 3670

'Lamps for the faithful, stones for Satan's head.'

If everyone possessed such powerful sight

That sees directly heaven's sun's pure light,

What need would men have for the stars should they

Be guided by the sun along the way?

He told the earth and clouds what had transpired:

'I'm just a man, but *I have been inspired*.*'

I used to be in nature like the rest

Till revelation's light filled up my breast;

I'm dark still when compared with the Supreme 3675

Though next to men's souls like pure light I seem:

My light is faint, so you can cope with it,

Since to behold the sun's rays you're unfit;

I'm honey mixed with vinegar, to heal

Your heart of the affliction that you feel—

When you're completely healthy once again

Throw out the vinegar—eat honey then!

When your heart's passion-free for God alone,

Witness *The Merciful sits on the throne*,*

Once the heart gains this link, then God's decree 3680

Rules him without an intermediary;

This discourse could go on, but there's no space—

I must advise Zayd not to seek disgrace.

Resumption of the story about Zayd

You won't find Zayd now, for this man has fled

Like horses from the shoeing-line they dread,

Who're you? Zayd cannot find himself—he's gone

Just like a star on which the sun has shone!

You won't find hide nor hair of him today,
 Not even one star, nor the Milky Way!
 The speech and senses of our fathers are 3685
 Effaced in this king's knowledge like a star,
 Their senses and their reasoning in turn,
 Like waves to *stand before us** will return.
 The dawn brings back the burdens of all men,
 Stars which were hidden go to work again:
 God gives the witless back their wits at dawn,
 Group after group with slavery's earrings on,*
 Stamping their feet and waving arms in praise,
 '*O Lord, you have revived us!*'* each now says.
 That crumpled skin and bones is now a knight 3690
 Who raises dust on racing out of sight:
 The grateful and ungrateful non-existents
 At Resurrection thus change to existents.
 Why turn your face and not look? Didn't you
 Do that at first in non-existence too?
 Later you dug your heels deep in the sand,
 Saying, 'Who can remove me from my land?'
 Do you not see God's actions are so clear:
 He dragged you by your ears all the way here
 To various different states that lay in store 3695
 Which you had not believed were real before;
 That non-existence is his slave, so strive
 To work hard, devil! Solomon's alive!
 A demon makes *large bowls like troughs** for him
 Scared to rebuff him or refuse his whim.
 Look at yourself now, trembling fearfully
 Like non-existence, which shakes constantly,
 If you are holding on to status here,
 That too is from your soul-consuming fear,
 For everything will hurt and wound your heart 3700
 Though it tastes sweet, the love of God apart.
 Approaching death gives such heart-wrenching strife
 If you lack Water of Eternal Life:*\br/>
 People just think of death when they're on earth,
 And doubt the Water of Life's actual worth—

Try to reduce these doubts of yours, my friend,
Go! If you sleep the night will quickly end!
Seek out that day within the depths of night,
The dark's consumed by that pure wisdom's light;
There is much gloom in its gloom, though it's stark — 3705
Water of Life is found close to the dark.
From slumber how can one lift up his head
While sowing seeds of heedlessness in bed?
Eating what's dead supports a sleep death-deep,
The burglar breaks in when the guard's asleep,
You don't know who your foes are in this instance,
Those made of fire are foes of your existence;
For water and its family fire's the foe,
Even though it can put it out, it's so:
Water can end fire's life if necessary 3710
Because it's water's children's enemy;
Also, there is the fire of lust, wherein
You'll find the root of error and all sin—
The outward fire though water deals with well,
The fire of lust can take you straight to hell—
This fire of lust is not controlled by water
Because it shares its nature with hell's torture.
The light of faith is lust's fire's only cure,
It puts out infidels' fires, that's for sure;
Who puts them out? God's Light, for it's superior, 3715
So make the Light of Abraham your teacher,
That from your Nimrod-like self's fire there may
Be for your incense-form a route away;
Indulging it won't cool your fiery lust,
Denial works—in this now put your trust!
How can the fire go out once it is lit
And you keep placing planks of wood on it?
This fire dies out if you deny it wood,
For water's poured on it through being good—
How can fire blacken faces that now shine 3720
Rosy with rouge from *fear of the Divine*?*

The fire in the city of Medina under Omar

Omar's reign saw a fire blaze up that could
 Consume huge rocks as if they were dry wood,
 It spread to buildings, then soared heavenwards
 And reached the highest nests of all the birds;
 Half of Medina was in days burnt down,
 Water, afraid of this, then fled the town!
 Some clever men tried putting out the fire
 With vinegar and water—it rose higher:
 The flames spread further still in spite of this— 3725
 They gained support straight from the Limitless.
 The people hurried to Omar to cry:
 ‘Water can’t put it out—we’re bound to die!’
 He said ‘This is a sign from God no less,
 It’s due to your own flame-filled stinginess.
 What use is water now—distribute bread!
 Stop being stingy, if by me you’re led!’
 The people said, ‘We’ve opened every door,
 We’re generous to a fault—does He want more?’
 He said, ‘You gave bread then because of rules 3730
 And out of habit, not for God, you fools,
 Just to show off about your piety,
 Not out of fear and inner poverty!’
 Don’t sow the seed of wealth on rotten land,
 Don’t place a dagger in a robber’s hand,
 Discern the faithful from the enemy—
 With those who know the Lord keep company:
 All men put first their own kind—that’s a fact,
 Just fools think a good deed is their own act.

*An enemy spits in the face of the Commander of the
Faithful* Ali, who drops his sword*

Learn how to act sincerely from Ali, 3735
God's lion, free from all impurity:
During a battle, he subdued a foe
Then drew his sword to deal the final blow.
That man spat in Ali's pure face, the pride
Of every saint and prophet far and wide:
The moon prostrates itself before this face
At which he spat—this act was a disgrace!
Ali put down his sabre straight away
And, though he was on top, he stopped the fray.
The fighter was astonished by this act, 3740
That he showed mercy though he'd been attacked:
'You pointed your sharp blade at me before,
But then you simply dropped it on the floor—
Greater than fighting me what did you see
That you eased up in your attack on me?
What did you see to end your vehemence,
For lightning to flash bright then dim at once?
What did you see that was reflected here
Deep in my heart, and made a flame appear?
What did you see beyond both being and place 3745
That you spared me though I spat in your face?
You are God's lion through your bravery
And who knows your high rank in chivalry!
You're Moses's cloud in the desert heat
Which brought a feast beyond compare to eat.'
The clouds bring wheat which men can grind and bake
To make some sweet and wholesome bread and cake:
The wings of mercy Moses's cloud spread
To give him ready-made hot cakes and bread;
For those who ate this bounty he unfurled, 3750
Through such kind grace, their banner in the world,

For forty years that wonderful largesse
 Fed those with hope without becoming less,
 Until they asked, because they'd grown so base,
 Why herbs and onions weren't sent in its place!*

Mohammad's people, noble men, can see
 Such food from God will last eternally:
 He said, '*I was with God the night before,**
Who fed me'—this was not a metaphor!

Accept this reading, make no argument,
 Such milk and honey you too might be sent;
 Interpreting throws back what you've received,
 Due to a fault in it that you've perceived.
 Seeing faults shows your mind is weak as well,
 Wisdom's the kernel, reason's just the shell.
 Judge critically your own vile self instead,
 Don't criticize the rose bush but your head!

3755

'You are completely intellect and sight,
 Ali, what did you see to stop the fight?
 Our soul's been split by your most gentle sword,
 Our earth's been washed by knowledge you have poured.
 I know these are His secrets, but tell me!
 Slaying without a sword's His mystery.'
 That Craftsman with no tools or hands still knows
 How to create the gifts that He bestows:
 He'll make you taste a hundred wines and more
 Which ears and eyes have never known before.
 'O heaven's hunting falcon, please tell me,
 Through the Creator what did you just see?
 Your eyes have learned to see the hidden sphere
 Unlike those stitched-up eyes of others here;
 One sees the moon above as clear as day,
 "The whole world's dark," another man will say;
 Another sees three moons in the same space,
 Though each observes the sky from the same place—
 Their outward eyes are sharp, their ears are too,
 And yet they flee me but hold on to you!

3760

3765

Is this illusion or His marvellous grace—
 You looking wolf-like, while I've Joseph's face?
If there were eighteen thousand worlds, not all 3770
 Would find each one of them perceptible—
The secret, great Ali, won't you relate,
 You who *brought good fate after evil fate*?
Either tell what your mind's seen candidly
 Or I'll divulge what trickled down to me:
It shone on me through you, but still was bright.
 Thus, like the moon, you silently spread light;
But if the moon should speak to us one day
 It would lead men more quickly on their way—
They're safe from errors of neglectful fools 3775
 Because the moon subdues the shrieks of ghouls,
Though silently the moon can serve as guide
 A talking moon's light would be multiplied.
Since you're "the gate to where God's knowledge is"*
 A ray from the bright sun of grace that's His,
Open up gate! To seekers you're eternal,
 And, through you, every husk can reach its kernel,
So open up forever, mercy's gate
 To *There is none like Him**—don't make us wait!
Each atom is a place where He'll appear 3780
 But if it's closed who'll say: 'the door is here!'
Unless the guard should swing it open wide
 Belief in this will not be roused inside,
But when it's opened it can vivify
 Your bird of hope, which then will start to fly.
If treasure's found in ruins by a man
 He'll then search every ruin that he can;
If from a dervish pearls you fail to find
 Why should you try the others of his kind?
Opinion, if for years itself runs on, 3785
 It can't pass its own nose, where it was born—
If you've not caught a scent from the unseen,
 Can you claim that beyond your nose you've seen?

*The infidel asks Ali, 'After defeating someone like me, why
did you drop your sword?'*

That friendly infidel then asked Ali
 Through drunkenness and savour, thoughtfully:
 'Commander, please inform me, go ahead!
 Make my soul like a foetus bow its head!
 The seven planets play in turn a role
 In nurturing the foetus, O dear soul,
 But when it needs a spirit, then the sun 3790
 Provides the help required to get this done:
 The foetus is stirred by the sun a bit
 When quickly it provides a soul for it;
 From planets it gains naught but a small trace
 But then the sun shines down on it warm grace.
 But how was this connection first begun
 Inside the womb with the most gorgeous sun?
 A hidden route beyond our human sight
 Provides a path to that celestial light,
 That route by which all hidden gold's refined 3795
 And stones turn into jewels that are mined,
 That route which gives each ruby its red shade
 And sends a spark where every horseshoe's made,
 That route which ripens fruit while on the tree,
 That route which gives the timid bravery.

'Tell all, great falcon, with your blazing wing,
 Who's been trained on the forearm of the king,
 O phoenix-catching falcon, make it known,
 You who defeat vast armies on your own—
 You are yourself *my whole community*, 3800
 Since I'm your prey, great falcon, please tell me!
 Mercy in wrath's place! I don't understand
 Why you would choose to shake a dragon's hand!'

The Commander of the Faithful answers, saying what the reason was for dropping his sword in that situation*

He said, 'I use my sword the way God's planned,

Not for my body but by God's command;

I am God's lion, not the one of passion—

My actions testify to my religion:

"*You did not throw when you threw*,"* God has said:

I'm just a sword the Sun swings at your head;

I've moved the baggage of my self away, 3805

"All but God's non-existent," I now say,

My Lord's the Sun and I'm the shadow seen,

For I'm His servant this side of the screen;

Adorned with jewels of union like a knife,

While fighting I don't kill but grant new life.

My diamond-bright blade blood can never stain—

How can the wind drive off my clouds again?

A mountain of forbearance and deep calm

The fiercest winds can't blow away or harm;

That which is swept by wind is trash, no more, 3810

And there are many winds like this in store!

The wind of rage and that of greed and lust

Blow those who don't pray at the time they must!

I am a mountain, He's my solid base,

Like straw I'm blown just by thought of His face;

My longing changes once His wind has blown,

My captain is the love of Him alone,

Rage may rule kings but I have conquered it;

I've tied up anger to my horse's bit,

The sword of my forbearance chopped my rage, 3815

God's anger is a mercy at my stage;

Although my roof's been wrecked I'm drowned in light:

*Father of Dust's** a garden blooming bright!

A reason had emerged in that attack

For me to choose to draw my sabre back,

So "*he loves for God's sake*" should be my name,

"*He hates for God*" my sole desire and aim,

“*He gives for God*” my liberality,
 “*He clings to God*” my being, as you see;
 I’m mean or generous too for God alone, 3820
 I’m His possession, not what men can own.
 My deeds for God are not based on opinion
 Or mere conformity, but through His vision,
 Reasoning and calculation I have fled
 To tie my sleeve to God’s cloak hem instead;
 While flying I can see the realm I’m in,
 While whirling the sole point round which I spin;
 If I should drag a load I know to where,
 For I’m the moon—my chief’s the sun up there!
 I can’t tell any more humanity, 3825
 A narrow river can’t contain the sea!
 I speak thus for their brains are limited,
 This isn’t wrong, it’s what the Prophet did,
 So hear my evidence, I’m free from lust,
 The word of slaves is worth much less than dust.’
 The testimony of a slave’s worth naught
 According to the law upheld at court,*
 Though thousands of slaves be your witnesses
 The court still won’t give you allowances;
 The slaves of lust are much worse in God’s view 3830
 Than men they’ve captured, bound, and auctioned too.
 The latter type can be set free again
 While lust’s slaves live with joy but die in pain—
 The slave of lust has no means of release
 Except the grace of God which doesn’t cease.
 He’s fallen in hell’s pit now, it’s too late
 And it’s his own fault—it’s not down to fate:
 He’s thrown himself inside such a deep pit
 That I can’t measure the full depth of it.
 I’ll stop here, for if this speech should extend 3835
 Not only hearts but stones would bleed, my friend;
 Not due to hardness would their hearts not bleed
 But through distraction and not taking heed—
 They’ll only bleed that day when blood’s worth naught
 But you must bleed when blood is worth a lot.

Slaves' testimonies are void as a rule—

Find witnesses who aren't slaves of the ghoul;
'*We've sent you as a witness*,'* God has said
Since he was free, from being's grip he'd fled.

'Rage can't enslave me,' said Ali, 'I'm free, 3840

There's naught here but God's attributes—come see!
Enter! God's grace has liberated you!

His mercy comes before His anger too!
Come in! Now you've fled danger that you've known
You're like a jewel that was once a stone;
You've fled the thorn of unbelief and doom
So in the rose-bed of '*He*'* you will bloom!

'Illustrious one, I'm you and you are I,

Ali, how could I cause Ali to die! 3845
Your sins surpass good deeds of the obedient

And you've traversed the heavens in an instant.'

Sins of such men excel their piety,

Rose leaves can grow from thorns for all to see:
The Prophet once Omar approached to kill—

This led him to Islam's acceptance still,*
And pharaoh ordered magic from his men

But fortune helped them save themselves again;
If magic and denial they'd not been taught,

To stubborn pharaoh would they have been brought?

Why did they witness Moses's famed rod? 3850

Their sin became obedience thus to God.

God has chopped off the thick neck of despair

For sin's turned to obedience everywhere,
Since he can change round evil acts this way

To righteous deeds, despite what whisperers say,
Cursed Satan now gets stoned in strong attacks

And out of jealousy he finally cracks;
To us a sinful act he'll try to sell

In order thus to lead us down to hell,

But when he sees that sin's now piety 3855

All he has left is sheer anxiety!

‘Enter! The door is open for you now—
 You spat but I gave favours anyhow;
 I grant such gifts to those who torture me
 And bow my head down in humility,
 Imagine what I give men who are loyal—
 Treasures and kingdoms that are all eternal!’

*The Prophet said in the ear of the stirrup-holder of the
 Commander of the Faithful Ali: ‘Ali will be slain
 by your hand, I swear to you!’*

‘The honey of my generosity
 Won’t turn to poison if you murder me;
 Into my servant’s ear the Prophet said 3860
 That he would one day chop off my sweet head,
 God’s Messenger thus made him understand
 That in the end I’d be slain by his hand.
 That servant now begs, “Kill me for my sake
 So I won’t make this dreadful, vile mistake!”
 I say, “Since you must bring about my end
 How can I try to dodge God’s will, my friend?”
 He falls before me, pleading, “Noble lord,
 Split me in two, for God’s sake, with your sword,
 So fate will not decree this as my role, 3865
 That my soul won’t burn pining for your soul.”
 I tell him, “Go! The ink’s already dry,
 That pen’s foiled giants who could touch the sky.
 There is no hatred in my soul for you
 Since this is not an act you choose to do;
 You are God’s instrument with which He’ll write—
 With God’s own instrument should I now fight?”’
 The warrior asked, ‘Then what’s revenge about?’
 Ali said, ‘It’s a mystery God’s set out:
 Should He now counter His own act, you’ll see 3870
 A garden grow from His change of decree;
 To change His own acts suits God for He’s one:
 He holds both grace and wrath in union,

He's the commander of phenomena,
In every realm He is the emperor.
If He breaks His own instrument, He'll then
Repair that broken instrument again:
*We made it be forgotten**— comprehend
That better things replace them in the end!
God abrogates laws for our benefit: 3875
He takes grass but gives flowers in place of it,
The day's activity is stopped at night—
Watch stillness now bestow true wisdom's light,
But then the night is cancelled by the day,
The fire of which makes stillness burn away.
Though sleep and rest in darkness may abound
The Water of Life* too in there is found,
And aren't minds refreshed while resting here
As pauses help a voice sound loud and clear:
From opposites thus opposites alight— 3880
Inside your heart's dark core He's shone this light.'

The Prophet's wars brought peace which all had sought,
Our peace these days stems from the wars he fought;
Though he slew thousands who showed enmity
This was so men could gain security:
The gardener trims the branches that cause harm
To cultivate a straight and tall date-palm,
And any weeds he finds he will uproot
So that the garden thrives and bears much fruit;
The dentist pulls out teeth that show decay 3885
So that the patient's pain will go away—
Loss therefore can hide many gains inside
As martyrs gain new life once they have died;
Once cut, the throat that ate its daily bread
*Receives God's bounty and feels joy** instead:
When throats of animals are lawfully slit
Men's throats grow and from grace they benefit,
But what if one should stab another man?
Guess by analogy now if you can!

A third throat grows, one nurtured day and night 3890
 With tonic from God and His rays of light—
 The throat that's cut drinks tonic He lets flow,
 The throat that dies in 'Yes!*' has just fled 'No!'

Say, 'That's enough!' You miserable, vile troll,
 How long will you choose bread to feed your soul?
 You bear no fruit just like the willow tree
 For you have given bread priority—
 If your base sensual soul can't give up bread
 To turn to gold try alchemy instead!
 Since you would like your garments cleaned today 3895
 From all the washers why now turn away?
 Although you break your fast with bread, my friend,
 He mends what's broken, He'll help you ascend,
 Since He mends what is broken, be aware:
 If He breaks things, in truth it is repair,
 But if you break things He will say to you:
 'Now fix it!' But you won't know what to do!
 He has the right to smash things up, for He
 Knows how to mend what's broken instantly:
 He who knows how to sew can tear as well, 3900
 He'll buy a better thing than what He'll sell;
 He'll wreck a house so its roof hits the floor
 And then rebuild it better than before;
 Should He decapitate a man, His grace
 Would bring a thousand heads soon in its place—
 If He had not decreed a confrontation,
 Saying: '*There's life through your retaliation,*'*
 Who would have had the gall to strike His sword
 At someone else and claim it's from the Lord!
 For anyone with open eyes can tell 3905
 That killer is a fool of fate as well;
 If by the Lord's decree a fool is led,
 He'll even strike against his own child's head—
 Don't curse the evildoers, but beware
 You're impotent too in God's ruling snare.

*Adam is surprised at the accursed Satan falling
astray and shows conceit*

Once Adam looked at Satan with disdain
Filled with contempt and scorn, when he was vain;
Self-conscious, he thought he was in the right
And laughed at wretched Satan's awful plight.
The Lord's possessiveness cried, 'Who are you? 3910
About the hidden truths you have no clue!'
If He should turn your waistcoat inside out,
He'd lift a mountain from its base no doubt,
He would unveil a hundred Adams then
And cause cursed Satans to be born again:
Adam said, 'I repent now for that glance,
I won't presume again with arrogance.
Now that I've begged, please lead me to decide
That wealth and knowledge don't deserve our pride;
*Don't let a heart you've blessed now go astray!** 3915
Make evil fates decreed now fade away!
Please spare our souls from meeting wretched ends,
Don't separate us from pure-hearted friends.
There's nothing worse than life apart from You,
Filled with anxiety, and helpless too.'

Our worldly goods steal what is spiritual,
Our body likewise strips our precious soul:
Our own hands broke our legs—if not for You
To save their souls what can mere humans do!
If he should save his soul from dangers here 3920
He will have stopped calamity and fear,
For if the soul's deprived of unity
It blindly mourns alone eternally—
Since You won't grant admission though he tries
To save his soul, that exiled lover dies.
Call heaven and God's Throne contemptible,
Say seas and mines are poor and miserable—
Compared with Your perfection that's correct
For transitory things You can perfect.

If You should curse Your slaves, You have the right, 3925
 For You that's fine, successful source of light!
 The sun and moon You can call worthless things
 And say that cypress trees are bent like springs,
 From non-existence and from harm You're free,
 To non-existence You grant strength to Be:
 Shedding is known by those who cause to grow,
 Since those who tear know also how to sew.
 Each autumn He makes gardens disappear
 Then causes glorious roses to grow here,
 Saying: 'You'd withered; come back fresh and bright! 3930
 Bloom beautifully and fill men with delight!'

Once the narcissus' eye went blind, He then
 Healed it; a broken reed He fixed again.
 We're not the Maker but the objects made,
 Content though weak—this is the way we've stayed,
 Saying: '*Myself! Myself!*'* repeatedly;
 We'd all be demons if You should decree.
 Escape from demons due to this we find:
 You have redeemed our souls from being blind;
 You show the way to all who are alive— 3935
 Without their sticks how can the blind survive!
 Whatever's sweet or bitter, all but You,
 Burns humans up and is fire's essence too,
 Whoever's refuge and support's a flame
 As Zoroastrians has become the same,*
 For *everything but God is foul and vain*;
God's grace is that cloud which pours down much rain.

*Resumption of the story about Ali and his leniency
 towards his own killer*

Think of Ali and his vile murderer,
 The kindness he showed his inferior:
 He said, 'I see my foe by day and night 3940
 But I nurse no bad feelings, nor feel spite,
 For, just like manna, death to me tastes sweet
 Since Resurrection's what I'm bound to meet.'

This deathless death is lawful for us now,
Lack of provisions feeds us anyhow:
Though it may look like death on the outside
There's life through which we will live on inside,
As birth for foetuses seems like death too
Though in the world they are thus born anew.
Because I yearn for death so eagerly 3945
*'Don't cause yourself to perish'** speaks to me:
We all know sweet fruit's banned, and we take heed
But to ban bitter fruit there is no need;
This berry with sour skin and flesh you see
Is banned for sourness and dishonesty,
The fruit of death though tastes sweet once it's peeled—
For me *'Now they're still living'** was revealed!
Kill me, my trusty friends! I will live on:
Eternal life awaits once I have gone;
There's life in my death, so please understand, 3950
How long must I stay exiled in this land!
If I were not in exile here today,
'We will return to God' why would He say?*
Returners go back to their home again,
To unity from separation's pain.

Ali's stirrup-holder falls before him, saying, 'Commander of the Faithful, kill me and release me from this fate!'

He said, 'Ali, please kill me straight away
So I won't live to see that awful day!
Please shed my blood—it will be lawfully—
So that the final hour my eyes won't see!
'Should every atom be a murderer 3955
And aim their daggers at your jugular,
They couldn't harm a hair or make you bleed
Because that isn't what the Lord's decreed.
So don't you grieve! I'll be your intercessor,
Not body's bondsman, I'm the spirit's master:
The body has no worth for me, it's clear
Without one I'm a noble chevalier—

The killing sword's sweet basil now instead,
 My death a banquet and narcissus-bed!
 The one who breaks his body in this way 3960
 Desire for leadership can never sway;
 Though he may strive for power outwardly
 That's just to show how rulers ought to be—
 To breathe life into leadership anew,
 Grow fresh fruit on the caliphate's tree too.*

*In explanation of how the Prophet's efforts to conquer Mecca and
 other towns was not out of love for power, for he has said: 'The
 world is a carcass.' Rather it was by God's command*

The Prophet strove to conquer Mecca, though
 Power was not his aim—still some don't know;
 He whose pure breast ignored the treasure-chest
 Of all the heavens when put to the test
 (When they were filled with treasure to the brim 3965
 And houris* and the spirits looked at him,
 Having adorned themselves just for his sake)
 Has no desire but God—make no mistake!
 God's glory filled him so much it was clear
 Even those close to God could not come near.
*No prophet can fit in that place, my friend,
 Nor angels even—try to comprehend!**
 'We're not distracted and we're not like carrion,'
 He said, 'We're drunk with God and not His garden.'
 The treasures of the heavens though he saw 3970
 The Prophet judged it worthless just like straw—
 What then are Mecca, Syria, and Iraq
 For him to covet and wish to attack!
 If you think this you must be sick indeed,
 Comparing him with your own stupid greed!
 Put yellow glass up right in front of you
 And everything will then look yellow too—
 To smash such coloured lenses is a must
 In order to distinguish Man from dust.

Dust rose behind his horse as that knight sped,
You thought the dust a man of God instead!
Satan saw dust and said, 'Things made of clay
Cannot be better than my fire, can they?'
If God's dear friends as evil you should see,
That thought of yours is Satan's legacy;
If you are not a child of Satan too,
How did the dog's inheritance reach you?

3975

'I'm no dog but God's lionheart instead,
The cage of form God's lionheart has fled!
The worldly lion seeks prey, loves to hoard,
Death's freedom draws the lion of the lord:
A hundred lives he sees in death—his aim
Becomes to burn moth-like within death's flame!
Desire for death's a necklace for the best
While for the Jews it was a major test:
"O Jewish people!" in the book God said,
"For the sincere there's gain in being dead:
While profit can make men desire to kill
Desire for one's own death is better still;
Let this desire be on your tongues now, Jews,
And thus among men honour you won't lose."
Not one Jew had the bravery to try
And face Mohammad's challenge; this is why
He said, "If they'd accepted this, then none
Would have continued to be Jews—not one!"
Instead they offered tax on properties,
Begging: "Don't put us all to shame now, please!"*
This discourse looks like it can't reach its end,
Give me your hand, since you have seen the Friend!

3980

3985

*The Commander of the Faithful Ali says to his own foe,
 'When you spat in my face my carnal soul was aroused
 and I lost the power to act sincerely, for God alone—that
 was what prevented me from killing you'*

The Leader of the Faithful told his foe: 3990

 'During that battle fought a while ago

When you spat in my face, my self was moved:

 I lost my temper though that's disapproved,

Thus both God and my passions had their shares

 But sharing's not allowed in God's affairs.

You were created by the Lord's own hand—

 You're His, not made by me, please understand!

Smash up forms made by God when He condones,

 Break the beloved's glass with just His stones!' 3995

The Magian heard this, found light in his heart,

 His Magian girdle then he tore apart,

Saying, 'I sowed the seed of wrong; just now

 I thought you would be different somehow.

The balance of the nature of the One,

 You are the pivot all scales hang upon;

You are my tribe and you're my origin,

 The light of my sect's candle, and my kin!' 4000

'I'm the Eye-seeking Lamp's* most humble slave,

 The one which to your lamp its radiance gave,

The slave of that wave of the sea's light too

 Which has just brought a gorgeous pearl to view.

To witness your conversion is my dream,

 For like the great ones of the age you seem.'

Then nearly fifty of his family,

 Like lovers sought the faith of certainty;

His clemency's sword had redeemed this way

 So many souls in bodies made of clay;

Sharper than iron's sword is mercy's blade,

 Much more successful than an army's raid.

Alas, for those two mouthfuls Adam chose, 4005
The fervour of pure thought in this way froze:
Wheat thus eclipsed his sun which had shone bright
Just like a full moon that's eclipsed at night—
One fistful thus made grace from Adam's heart
Scatter just like the stars so far apart.*
When spiritual then food was beneficial,
But when it was mere form it caused dismissal,
Like the green thistles that the camels eat
And from it benefit as though it's wheat;
But when they have all dried up and turned brown 4010
The desert camels swallow them still down—
They tear this camel's palate up, O Lord,
A nourishing rose thus becomes a sword!
When food was spiritual it then was green
But once mere form it turned stale, as we've seen:
In the same way you were accustomed to
Pure, wholesome food—a gracious soul like you
Now eats this ghastly dry stuff every day,
Since spirit has become mixed with mere clay;
Once mixed with clay it's dry and it cuts flesh— 4015
Abstain from it now, camel, it's not fresh!

This speech flows earth-soiled, it has lost its force,
The water's turbid—block it at its source!
God will transform it to a pure stream then—
He made it dark, He'll make it clear again.
Patience will bring fulfilment in the end, 4018
Have patience—*God knows best what's right*, my friend!

BOOK TWO

Prose Introduction

Here is the reason for the postponement of this second volume: if all divine wisdom should be made known to the slave at once, the benefits in it would leave him unable to act, and the infinite wisdom of God would obliterate his comprehension. He would not be able to cope.

This is why God makes a little of that infinite wisdom into a toggle which can be put into his nostrils, to lead him like a camel towards the necessary action. If He were not to inform him of those benefits, he would not move at all, because knowledge of the gain to be made is what motivates human beings, who say, 'For the sake of this I will do what is right.' If He should pour infinite wisdom down on him, the slave would be unable to move, just as a camel will not walk unless a toggle is put into its nose of an appropriate size—if the toggle is too big it will just slump down: 'There is nothing, the storehouse of which is not with Us. And We only send it down in a fixed measure.' Without water, clay cannot be made into a brick, nor can it become a brick if the water is excessive. 'He has raised the sky and He has set up the scales.'* He gives everything in the right proportion, not without measurement and calculation, apart from to those people who have been transformed from their physical forms, becoming the ones referred to when He says, 'He provides without calculation for whomsoever He chooses.'* Whoever hasn't tasted will not yet be aware.*

Someone asked, 'What is a lover?' I answered, 'You will know when you become like us.' True love cannot be measured, which is why it is said to be an attribute of God in reality, and applicable to the slave only metaphorically. 'He loves them'—this is the totality; 'and they love Him'—do 'they' exist though in reality?*

Exordium

We have delayed a while this *Masnavi*—

For blood to change to milk time's necessary:

Until the baby's born your blood won't turn

To milk that's sweet, so listen well and learn!

The reins were pulled back by Hosamoddin
 At heaven's summit in the deep unseen;
 When he went on his spiritual ascension*
 Buds wouldn't bloom without his spring's attention,
 Then, from the ocean when he came to shore, 5
 The *Masnavi*'s harp-strings were tuned once more.
 The *Masnavi* has burnished every heart—
 Blessed the day we opted to restart!*
 The date of its resumption I'll tell you:
 It was within the year six sixty-two.*
 The nightingale which left has now returned
 To hunt those mystic truths for which it yearned—
 May the king's arm remain the falcon's station,
 And may His gates stay open to creation!

The bane of this world is desire, my friends— 10
 Renounce it and drink wine that never ends!*
 Close tightly your mouth, and you'll clearly find
 To that world open gullets make men blind.
 You vile mouth, you are nothing but hell's gate!
 This world's an intermediary state,
 But next to it there is eternal light,
 As pure milk flows near blood all day and night—
 Don't heedlessly step in this blood, beware!
 Your milk will turn to blood once mixed in there!
 Adam took one step for enjoyment's sake 15
 And lost his seat above for that mistake;
 As if he were a demon, angels fled—
 How much he wept for just a piece of bread.*
 Although it was as trivial and as thin,
 His eyes were blinded by that hair of sin;
 Adam saw by eternal light, but still
 Hair in his eye seemed like a massive hill.
 If he had sought advice, it would have meant
 He'd not have had to beg and to repent:
 When prudent intellects unite, they see 20
 How to prevent bad actions easily,

Though when the carnal soul joins intellect,
It makes it useless due to its effect.
When due to loneliness you feel undone,
Go to the friend's shade—you'll become a sun!
Go, seek God's friend as quickly as you can;
Find him, then God will be your friend, good man.
The one who turned to Him while in seclusion
Learned from His Lord that all else is illusion—
Don't turn away from friends, but from your foes; 25
Don't wear coats when it's hot, but when it snows!
If intellects join forces that is best—
More light shines and the path's made manifest,
While carnal souls when paired, just like the night
Cause darkness to obscure the path from sight.
Hunter, the friend is like your eye—take care;
Do not let straw or splinters blow in there.
Don't bring more dust with your tongue's broom, but try
To not let any dust fall in your eye.
'Believers are like mirrors',* so his face 30
Of such pollution doesn't have a trace;
The friend's a mirror for the suffering soul—
Don't breathe on it, but practise self-control.
You must control your breath continually,
So it won't cloud its face immediately.
Soil greets friends, raising flowers by the score;
Mere soil does this—are you not worth much more?
On being joined with their friends, even trees
Blossom all over due to their sweet breeze;
In autumn, when these trees face foes instead, 35
Under a blanket each one hides its head,
Saying, 'A foe brings strife now, so I'll sleep—
This is my sole recourse or else I'd weep.
I'll sleep just like the Sleepers in the Cave
Rather than be cruel Decius's slave;*'
Since Decius would waste their waking hours,
Sleep was their source of honour and great powers.'
When filled with knowledge, sleep is wakefulness,
While staying up with fools will cause distress.

In winter crows arrive, and from that day 40
 The nightingales stay mute and fly away;
 Without the rose, the nightingales fall silent,
 As daytime ends the hour the sun is absent.
 O sun, you leave our garden far from sight
 To fill *the other side of earth* with light!
 The sun of gnosis has no motion, though;
 It rises in the souls of those who know,
 The heaven's perfect sun especially—
 By day and night it shines, perpetually.
 With Alexander, find *its rising place*,* 45
 To be forever filled with royal grace;
 Its rising-place will always stay with you—
 The East, in love, will seek your sunsets too!
 Towards the sunset bat-like senses fly,
 Higher ones to its rising in the sky.
 Rider, the sensual path is for the ass—
 Shamefully why compete with it for grass?
 Besides these senses are some that are proper
 Which are real gold, while these ones are like copper.
 At Judgment Day's bazaar, in place of gold 50
 Do you think that your copper will get sold?
 Off darkness bodily senses have to feed,
 While sunshine's what your higher senses need.
 You've brought your senses to the unseen light;
 Like Moses's, your hand now shines so bright!*
 Your attributes are gnosis's bright sun,
 Which holds the heavens all in place as one.
 You look now like the sun and then the sea,
 Mount Qaf,* and then the phoenix magically,
 But in your essence you're none of those things— 55
 You are much more, beyond imaginings.
 The spirit's linked to wisdom in some way,
 Not Arabic or Turkish—what are they!
 You who appear in many forms have none;
 Anthropomorphists, monists too, You stun:
 Anthropomorphism He wipes away,
 But then His forms lead monists far astray!

When drunk, Abo'l-Hasan* won't use God's name,
 But calls: '*You with small teeth and slender frame!*'
 Sometimes he wrecks his own manifestation 60
 To emphasize God's All-transcendent station.
 The sensual eye leads the Mu'tazilite,*
 While Sunnites* follow union's inner sight;
 Mu'tazilites are slaves of outward sense;
 They act like Sunnites but it's mere pretence:
 If you submit to sensual dominance,
 Your claim 'We're Sunnites' is through ignorance.
 The senses proper Sunnites leave to die;
 They're led to God through wisdom's inner eye.
 If bestial senses could see God, a herd 65
 Of cows and asses would see—how absurd!
 If you don't know of other senses, son,
 Apart from lust, which is the bestial one,
 Explain why Man was honoured specially
 And singled out to gain proximity?
 Saying, 'He's formless', or 'in forms' instead,
 Is futile, if from form you haven't fled.
 'In forms' or 'formless', this much I can tell:
 He's with the kernel which has left its shell.
*There's no blame on the blind,** but, if you see, 70
 You must endure, for *patience is the key*:
 The medicine of patience sets aflame
 Your eyes' veils, opens up your breast the same;
 And when the mirror of your heart is clear
 You'll see forms from beyond the world down here—
 You'll see pure forms, and their Creator too,
 Good fortune's rug and Who spread it for you.

My idol's form's like Abraham to me:
 An idol-smasher in reality.*
 Praise God that when He first chose to appear 75
 My soul saw its own image there so clear!
 His threshold's dust seduced my faithful heart—
 Shame on those who still choose to stay apart!

I thought, 'If I am good, I'll earn His grace;
 But if I'm ugly, He'll laugh in my face!
 The answer's to inspect oneself before
 He laughs, 'How can I buy this from the store!
 'He's beautiful and *He loves beauty*'*—can
 An old hag be the choice of a young man?
 Beauty attracts the beautiful—recite: 80
 'Good women for good men'* as proof I'm right!
 Attraction is possessed by all things here:
 Warmth draws warm things, the cold pulls cold things near;
 Eternal ones attract each other, while
 The worthless just attract the vain and vile;
 Those made of fire attract just the same kind;
 Those filled with light draw their own sort, you'll find.
 You shut your eyes and feel discomfort start—
 From daylight they can't bear to be apart;
 While eyes are shut the pain will not subside— 85
 They yearn to join with light that is outside;
 It's due to your eyes' light's attracting pull,
 Which seeks light rays as soon as possible.
 If your eyes feel some pain while open, then
 Your heart's eye's shut—so open that again!
 Recognize your heart's eye's appeal tonight—
 It seeks God's incomparable, pure light!
 When blocked of transient light, pain fills your eyes,
 So you should open them, if you are wise;
 But blocking out the everlasting light 90
 Will cause pain too—avoid this wretched plight!

When He calls me I start a self-inspection:
 'Am I fair or will my looks earn rejection?
 If a fine beauty leads a beast along,
 She's only mocking what does not belong!
 To see my own face can there be a way?
 Is my complexion now like night or day?'
 I searched for my soul's form in everyone,
 But it did not reflect in anyone.

I moaned, 'What else are mirrors meant for then

95

But so each knows himself from other men!

Your mirrors show the husk and not the kernel;

The soul-revealing mirror is eternal:

This mirror for the soul is the saint's face,

The one who is beyond all time and space—

'Heart, seek a mirror of this type!' I'd scream,

'Reach for the ocean, and not a mere stream!'

In this way, slaves reach God eventually:

Pain led pure Mary to the date-palm tree.*

Your eye became my heart's eye, then I found

100

My old heart vanished, for in you I'd drowned.

O universal mirror, I now see

My image in your eyes so vividly!

I said, 'I've found myself at last today;

I see in his eyes the enlightened way.'

'You're just imagining it!' my mind's doubts said,

'Discern what's real from what's just in your head!'

My image spoke then from within your eye:

'In union I am you and you are I.'

This eye which witnesses Truth constantly

105

How can mere fancies enter? Answer me!

If you should see your form in others' eyes,

Consider that as false—don't fantasize!

The kohl of false existence they've applied

While drinking Satan's wine—they've clearly lied!

Their eyes see emptiness and mere illusion,

Mistaking non-existents in confusion;

Since my eye's kohl is from God, I can see

The real existents, not just fantasy.

If there's the hair of self before your eye,

110

You'll think mere stones are pearls that men would buy;

A jasper from a pearl you can distinguish

The day belief in your self you relinquish,

So listen to this tale, pearl-connoisseur,

To tell what's certain from what men infer!

*In the time of Omar someone imagined that
he had seen the new moon**

The month of Ramadan, in Omar's reign,
 People ran to a hill above the plain
 To greet the new moon as a hopeful sign—
 One called, 'Omar, come watch the new moon shine!'

But Omar saw no moon above, and said: 115
 'That moon's an image dreamt up in your head!
 If not, explain how, with my better sight,
 I can't see any moon at all tonight.
 First rub your eyebrows with a wet hand, then
 Attempt to look at the new moon again.'
 The man did this, then couldn't see it there;
 He said, 'It's disappeared into thin air!'

Omar explained, 'Your eyebrow was a bow
 That shot false views at you just like a foe!'

A hair had veiled him—now he felt ashamed 120
 That vision of the new moon he had claimed:
 A single stray hair veiled the sky behind—
 When your whole frame is bent, you're almost blind!
 Straighten your frame through those with perfect ways—
 Seeker of straightness, don't avert your gaze.
 Good weighing-scales correct the others, while
 Unbalanced ones make others mean and vile;
 Whoever balances with the perverse
 Will lose his brain, bedazzled by their curse.

'Be hard on infidels!' the Prophet said: 125
 Renounce all things but God, as though they're dead.
 Chop off the heads of others with your blade!
 Be lion-like—don't flatter them, afraid!
 Don't disappoint God's faithful friends. Each knows
 That thorns are enemies of that fine rose.
 Set fire to wolves like incense, don't appease.
 The wolves are Prophet Joseph's enemies.*
 Beware when Satan calls you 'darling child'—
 He hopes that in this way you'll be beguiled;

He offered Prophet Adam the same bait,
And thus that black rook trapped him in check-mate.
That rook moves fast—don't get caught by surprise!
Don't watch this game of chess with drowsy eyes.
He can entrap your queen with many tricks,
Just like the food which in your gullet sticks;
His morsel stays blocked there until you're old—
What is this morsel? Love of rank and gold.
You fickle fool, wealth is what blocks throats up,
So you can't down the Water of Life's cup.*
And if your wealth's been stolen by a foe,
A thief has robbed a thief—you ought to know!

130

135

*A snake-catcher steals a snake from
another snake-catcher*

From a snake-catcher someone stole a snake;
The fool saw as success this huge mistake.
From that snake's bite its owner thus was spared—
It killed the thief who'd now become ensnared.
The owner saw the thief as he lay dead:
'It was my snake that took his life,' he said,
'I'd prayed to find this wretch eventually,
To claim my snake, then take it home with me—
Thank heavens, God chose not to answer it:
What I thought loss was to my benefit!'
So many prayers request catastrophe,
But God opts not to listen mercifully.

140

*A companion of Jesus begs him to give life
to some bones*

Jesus was followed by a stupid twit
Who came across some bones in a deep pit:

'Teach me God's Greatest Name,* my friend,' he said,
 'With which you're able to revive the dead,
 So I can do some good to these poor bones
 And grant them life though now they're like mere stones.'
 Jesus said, 'Shut your mouth! That's out of reach: 145
 It's not designed for your lips or your speech.
 It needs breath purer than the rain and light,
 And action finer than an angel's flight—
 It may take longer than a century
 To make you fit for heaven's treasury.
 If you should grasp this rod now, understand
 Your hand is not like Moses's pure hand.'*
 He said, 'If I'm not fit for secrets now,
 You should chant over these bones anyhow!'
 Jesus asked, 'What's the meaning of this, God? 150
 What is the point of a request so odd?
 Despite his sickness, this fool feels no strife:
 This corpse is not concerned for his own life.
 His own corpse this man chooses to neglect,
 So that a stranger he might resurrect!
 God said, 'Such fools are bad luck; all that grows
 Are thorns from what the ignorant man sows.
 Those who in this world sow seeds of this kind
 Inside the rose-garden you'll never find.
 A rose in their hands turns into a thorn, 155
 And as vile snakes such men are soon reborn;
 Poison and snakes they make with alchemy—
 As different from the pure souls as can be.'

*A Sufi asks a servant to look after his ass and
 the servant says, 'There is no strength or power
 except through God'**

A wandering Sufi on his latest quest
 Stayed at a Sufi lodge once as a guest.
 At the small stable he kept his ass tied,
 So he could then relax with friends inside.

With them, in meditation he partook—
Such company can teach more than a book;
The Sufi's book's not marked with words men write, 160
For it's a heart like snow, one pure and bright;
The scholar's work through words he writes is known;
By footprints is the Sufi's method shown—
Like hunters he has hunted game instead:
He saw deer tracks and followed where they led.
For several steps, on tracks he has relied,
But now the scent of musk serves as his guide.
When he gives thanks for this source of attraction,
Of course he will attain full satisfaction—
One stage by scent alone if you ascend, 165
That's more than crossing scores by tracks, my friend!
For mystics, hearts where such pure moonbeams shine
*Have opened up the gates** to the Divine.
To them it is a door, to you a wall,
To them a gem, to you a stone—that's all.
The Sufi sage much more in bricks can view
Than you see in a mirror facing you.
The masters' souls were part of God's abundance
Before this world was formed—this isn't nonsense!
They lived before their bodies, long ago; 170
They gathered fruit before men learned to sow;
They could boast souls before all form and motion,
And they bored pearls before there was an ocean;
While making Man was being still debated,
Deep in His power's sea they celebrated;
When angels tried to stop God, disappointed,
Such men already knew they'd been appointed.*
Man was told of the forms of every kind
Before the spirit in form was confined;
Before the heavens, Saturn they could view; 175
Before grains they saw bread and ate it too;
Before they had a brain they had a thought;
Without an army wars they bravely fought.
Certainty comes to them in just one instant—
Direct sight still unknown to those who're distant.

(You think about the future and the past—
 Escape them both and you'll be cured at last.)
 Beyond all space, they still see every place;
 Before all mines they knew gold coins from base,
 And prior to creation of the vine 180
 They got so drunk by drinking lots of wine.
 In hot July they can see wintry days,
 And they see shadows in the sun's bright rays;
 Wine in the grape's heart these men can perceive,
 And matter even when this realm they leave.
 The sky drinks freely from their circle's cup;
 With gold their kindness dresses the sun up.
 And if you ever come across a pair
 Of them, you'll think there's one then thousands there,
 For their plurality's like waves in seas: 185
 They seem like separate forms if there's a breeze.
 Like light in different windows, each man's soul
 Just seems discrete and not part of one whole;
 When you look at the sun, you see one sphere,
 But those still veiled by forms claim that's not clear.
 Animal spirits have divisions, friend,
 The human's though is one and has no end,
 Because *God's light was sprayed on them,** and you
 Can never separate that light in two.
 Companion, put your weariness aside. 190
 About His beauty mark I'll then confide.*
 None can describe such beauty that we mention—
 What are the worlds? His beauty mark's reflection!
 If I should breathe one word concerning it,
 My speech would cause my body then to split!
 Just like an ant inside a granary,
 With joy I carry loads too great for me!

Relating the meaning of the tale was halted because of the inclination of the audience to listen to its outward form

When will the one so envied by the light
 Let me choose vital teachings to recite!

Sea waves cast foam, which forms a barrier, then
They draw back just to stretch ahead again.
Listen now, what precisely blocks the way?
Perhaps it is your heart that's gone astray?
The listener's thinking of that Sufi guest;
Absorbed with him, he wants to hear the rest,
So it is necessary to return
To end that tale, and of his fate to learn.
That Sufi is much more than he appears;
Walnuts have pleased you for too many years.
Our bodies are like walnuts, my dear friend—
Real men beyond their bodies will ascend.
And even if you don't, God's generous grace
Will lift you up beyond this wretched place.
Listen now to the tale, as I narrate;
Make sure the grain from chaff to separate.

The servant agrees to look after the ass and stays behind

The session of the dervishes held there
Soon ended and excitement filled the air.
Before their guest they then laid out a feast,
While now his thoughts returned to his poor beast:
He told the servant, 'Go now and prepare
The straw and barley for my steed with care.'
'God give me strength!* Why tell me what I know?
That's been my work since many years ago.'
'Moisten its barley, for it has lived long
And its remaining teeth are not that strong.'
'God give me strength! Why carry on this way?
Others are taught this task by me each day.'
'Take off its saddle first,' the Sufi said,
'And rub some oil on both its back and head.'
'God give me strength! You know-all! What a bore!
Thousands of guests like you I've served before,
And all of them were satisfied with me:
"Guests are as precious as our souls"—you'll see!

'Give it some lukewarm water—cold won't do!
'God give me strength! I feel ashamed for you.'
 'Don't mix too much straw with its barley, friend.'
'God give me strength! When will these orders end?'
 'Sweep its space clear of stones and any shit,
 And, if the floor's wet, throw some sand on it!'
'God give me strength! Trust God, don't live with stress! 215
 Be like the Prophet—talk a little less.'
 'Curry with a good comb the donkey's back!'
'God give me strength! Shame is the thing you lack.'
 The servant said this and rose to his feet:
 'I'm off to fetch some barley and some wheat.'
 In truth, he left all thought of work behind;
 He'd given to the guest false peace of mind.
 He joined up with some friends, and ridiculed
 The orders of the Sufi he had fooled.

After so many days of travelling 220
 The Sufi slept and dreamt the following:
 His donkey with a huge wolf twice its size
 Biting off chunks of flesh from its small thighs!
'God give me strength!' he said, 'Am I delirious?
 Where is that servant who had seemed so serious?'
 He dreamt next that his donkey walked and fell,
 First in a ditch and then deep down a well;
 He dreamt all kinds of terrible affairs,
 Fetched the Qur'an and read aloud some prayers.*
 He said, 'My friends have gone—what can I do? 225
 They've shut all of the doors behind them too.'
 Then he thought, 'This is truly curious—
 Didn't that servant share some food with us?
 I treated him with love and courtesy
 So why should he now show such enmity?
 There has to be a cause for nastiness;
 Our common bond should nurture faithfulness.
 But generous Adam treated Satan well,
 And yet that devil sought to give him hell;

Why then does every snake and scorpion
Desire to harm men, as if just for fun?
Wolves kill—for this they are notorious;
It's clear such creatures are too envious.
Is it not wrong to think ill of another?
Why should I be suspicious of my brother?
But prudence means preparing for the worst—
If you don't, then you'll soon be harmed and cursed.'
He grew distressed about his donkey's state—
May suffering like this be our worst foes' fate!
That donkey lay in dirt, its bridle torn;
All it could do was lie down there and mourn;
Exhausted by the journey, left unfed,
The donkey lay there looking almost dead.
All night the donkey brayed as if in prayer:
'I gave up barley! God, this isn't fair!
Have mercy shaikhs!' it spoke thus inwardly,
'Such a vile wretch has devastated me!'
The torture that this donkey underwent
Was like what land-birds feel when floods are sent.
It rolled from side to side throughout the night,
Because of hunger and its awful plight,
Then in the morning that vile servant came
And changed the bridle to avoid all blame,
Then like a donkey-seller struck a blow,
Treating the donkey like a dog for show.
The donkey jumped because of the sharp sting,
But couldn't tell men what was happening.

Members of the caravan perceive that the Sufi's donkey is sick

Each time the Sufi mounted his poor ass
Its legs collapsed as if mere blades of grass,
And each time it was lifted up again
It looked afflicted still to all the men.
One tried to twist and pull its ears with force,
The next looked in its mouth to find the source,

One looked for stones trapped in its hooves instead,
 Another sought what made its eyes turn red.
 They said, 'Shaikh, what on earth has now gone wrong—
 Did you not say: "Thank God, my donkey's strong!"?'
 'The victim of "*God give me strength!*"', he said
 'Will not know how to walk, though it be led.
 "*God give me strength!*" was all it ate in there; 250
 It lies prostrate—last night it spent in prayer.'
 Most people are like cannibals today!
 Don't trust the friendly greetings that they say.
 Men's hearts are homes for demons; listen less
 To chatter from those filled with wickedness.
 From them if you taste '*Give me strength!*' one night,
 Just like this donkey you'll fall in the fight.
 Those tracked by a vile demon while down here,
 And by the praise of foes who aren't sincere,
 Will fall head first just like a giddy ass— 255
 Islam's path and *Serat's* bridge* they can't pass.
 Don't fall for flattery, but see the snare.
 Don't stroll around, as if without a care.
 '*God give me strength!*' a thousand devils say—
 Adam, see Satan in the snake, and pray!
 'My soul and lover!' it calls out to you,
 To butcher you and flay your skin off too.
 With hot air it desires your blood; God knows
 You'll pay if you take opium from your foes.
 Now at your feet it lays its head, to spill 260
 Your blood just like a butcher—it can kill.
 Like lions, turn your hunters to your prey.
 From friends and strangers' praises turn away.
 Base men are like this servant tragically—
 Better to have none than their flattery!
 Don't settle here in their realm where there's danger.
 Do your own work and not that of a stranger.
 Your body is the stranger; it is plain
 From this stems all your misery and pain—
 Don't feed it sweets and greasy food, for both 265
 Will stop you seeing any inner growth.

Even if placed in musk, the body still
Will stink the day it dies and make men ill.
Don't rub musk on your body but your heart:
Musk is God's name—from Him don't stay apart!
The hypocrite smears musk on just for show;
His spirit in a rubbish bin he'll throw.
God's name he chants, but all he has within
Is the foul stench of thoughts embroiled in sin.
His chants are vain, like grass on an ash mound, 270
A rose which on a dunghill's slope is found—
Such flowers won't stay there for very long;
A joyful circle is where they belong.
'*Good women come to good men,*' God told you,
'*To wicked men come wicked women*'* too.
Don't bear spite, for those whom spite leads astray
Are buried with each other and will pay;
Spite stems from hell, including spite you show;
It's part of hell and your religion's foe.
If you're a part of hell, take special care; 275
Parts gravitate towards the whole—beware!
The bitter join the bitter certainly,
But how can vain breath join the truth? Tell me!
If you're a part of heaven, though, good friend,
You will feel pleasure that will never end.
Brother, your worth is in your thoughts alone;
Apart from that you're only flesh and bone:
You are a rose, if all your thoughts are selfless;
If bitter, you're a thorn that is judged worthless.
Rose water people sprinkle on their face, 280
While urine's poured away in some foul place.
Look at the trays of the apothecary—
Each good and bad thing placed accordingly:
Each item is displayed with its own kind,
Such order pleases both the eye and mind.
Sugar and incense, should they mix together,
He'll separate completely from each other.
When souls are spilled the way such trays are smashed,
Good and bad mix like water that has splashed.

God sent the prophets with their books to earth, 285
 So He could pick the grains that have true worth;
 We were all as one whole before they came;
 No one knew good from bad—we were the same,
 Counterfeit mixed with genuine; our sight
 Could not discern since it was always night
 Until God made the prophets' sun appear,
 And said, 'Be off, fraud! Pure one, now come near!'
 Eyes now can see the colours that are shown,
 Distinguishing a ruby from a stone;
 A jewel from a splinter they can tell, 290
 Since splinters make one's eyes turn red and swell.
 The counterfeiters only like the night,
 While gold inside the mine longs for some light,
 For daylight is a mirror which displays
 What something's worth and if it merits praise.
 God said the Resurrection* is a 'day':
 Colours, like gold and red, light must display.
 In fact, the hearts of saints outshine bright days—
 Daylight seems dim next to one of their rays.
 The day is when the saint's soul is revealed, 295
 Eye-sealing night is when it is concealed.
 This is why God swore, '*By the break of day*'*—
 The Prophet's light is what these words convey;
 That God just meant the usual dawn, some claim,
 But that is His reflection all the same;
 Swearing on something transient would be wrong—
 In God's speech temporal things do not belong!
 Abraham '*didn't love what sets*'; tell me
 How then could God swear on what's transitory?
 He said, '*I don't love those that set*'*; his Lord 300
 Could not have sworn on what he'd deemed a fraud!
 And '*By the night*' means God hides from men's eyes
 The Prophet—human form was his disguise;
 From yonder sky when His sun came in sight,
 '*He hasn't left you,*' it told body's night;
 Through suffering, His union one can earn:
 '*He has not hated you*'* to sweets will turn.

Every expression of a state has told—

States are like hands, expressions tools they hold.

A goldsmith's tool when in some cobbler's hand 305

Is like a seed which has been sown in sand;

The cobbler's tool for ploughmen is this way,

Like feeding donkeys bones and puppies hay.

Mansur's 'I am the Truth!' was purest light,

But Pharaoh's 'I am God!' claimed his own might;*

The rod in Moses's hand was a witness,

In the magicians' hands, though, it proved worthless.*

Jesus refused to teach God's greatest name*

To that companion, which was just the same:

He would have blamed his tools, stayed in the dark, 310

Like striking stone on clay to make a spark.

The stone is paired with iron, its true mate—

A true mate is required to procreate.

The one who has no mate or tools is He

Who is beyond doubt and plurality.

Those who use many Gods as polytheists

Agree there's just one God with monotheists—

Don't squint and they'll appear the same to you;

The polytheists assert God's Oneness too.

If you assert His Oneness, you'll spin round, 315

Struck by His polo-stick across the ground;

Each time the king should strike them heavily

Such balls become more true and blemish-free.

My cross-eyed friend, heed well what you will hear,

Rub salve too on your weak eye through your ear!

Pure words won't enter hearts that are still blind;

They seek light's source and leave the blind behind.

Perverse hearts hear the devil's vile deceit,

Since crooked shoes are made for odd-shaped feet.

Though you respect such wisdom, you're unfit; 320

It will evade you—you're not meant for it.

And though you write it down and count your gain,

Then boast that all of it you can explain,

It turns away from your vain sophistry,
 And breaks apart all chains, then starts to flee.
 If one can't read, but has a heart aflame,
 Knowledge will be one's trained bird all the same;
 It won't abide with any idiot,
 As peacocks won't stay in a peasant's hut.

How a king found his falcon in the home of a decrepit old woman

Unfaithful is the bird which flees its king 325
 For some old crone who sifts flour, murmuring.
 While for her children she was cooking soup,
 An old crone saw a noble falcon swoop.
 She clipped the falcon's wings and tied each claw,
 Then cut its talons and fed it some straw.
 She said, 'Unworthy men neglected you:
 Your wings have grown too long, your talons too;
 You've fallen ill through undeserving hands—
 Mother will nurse you now; she understands.'
 Ignorant people's love is like this, friends: 330
 Their crooked path has many twists and bends.

The king then traced the route his bird had flown
 And saw the tent belonging to that crone;
 He found the falcon in an awful way,
 Then wept and mourned that he had seen this day.
 He said, 'This is for what you did to me,
 For showing me a lack of loyalty:
 You fled from heaven and to hell you came—
*The people of the fire are not the same.'**
 Those who flee stubbornly find this reward: 335
 To an old crone from the All-Knowing Lord!
 The falcon rubbed its wings on the king's hand,
 Then said, 'I've sinned, but now I understand.
 Where should the wicked creatures weep and moan,
 If, noble king, you hear the good alone?'

Our souls seek sin due to His liberal grace,
For he makes beautiful each ugly face.
Do not act badly; even good you do
Seems foul in the Most Beautiful Lord's view.
You thought your service meritorious, 340
And so indulged in shameful sinfulness:
Prayer and remembering Him were specified,
In doing this, though, you were spoilt by pride;
Alongside God you claimed a voice as well—
Such unbelief made many fall to hell.
Although the king sits on the ground with you,
Know who you are, and sit as slaves should do.

The falcon said, 'King, with deep shame I burn,
And now repent—to true faith I return.
If someone you've made drunk walks crookedly 345
Due to this state, hear his apology.
Although I've lost my talons, if you care,
I will pull out for you the sun's last hair.
And though I've lost my wings, through your caress,
The sky will make my flight so effortless.
Grant me a girdle—mountains I'll pull out;
I'll snap the army's flag, and start a rout!
In size and strength I'm greater than a gnat,
So Nimrod's realm my wings too can knock flat! *
Though I look weak, I'm like that flock of birds— 350
My foe's an elephant from the wild herds.
If I drop down a pellet that is small,
Still its effect is like a cannonball;
Although my stone is like a tiny pea,
Each foe it hits will be killed instantly.' *
Moses came to the fray armed with a stick, *
Then saw off well-armed Pharaoh with one flick.
Each single prophet who served God alone
Stood firm against the whole world on his own:
When Noah asked God for a sword, He made 355
Each wave in that huge flood sharp as a blade. *

Mohammad, don't fear armies which pass by,
 For you can split the moon up in the sky,*
 Then all the stars will see and sing your praise,
 Now that it's not the moon's but your own phase.
 It is your era; Moses too would pray
 That he might taste your era's grace one day:
 Once he had glimpsed your era's majesty,
 Which witnesses the full theophany,
 He begged, 'Lord, what an era of pure grace, 360
 In which there is full vision of Your Face!
 Plunge me, Your Moses, deep inside Your sea,
 And then, in Ahmad's time, deliver me!'*
 'Moses, I've shown that era now,' God said,
 'And opened up for you a path ahead,
 For, though you live now, with him you belong—
 But don't expect your life to last that long!
 I'm kind, and show my slaves food far away,
 So they, through longing, learn to weep today.'
 A mother rubs her baby's little nose 365
 To wake him, so he feeds from her and grows;
 The baby dozed off hungry, unaware;
 Now though he seeks the nipples that she'll bare:
'I was a hidden treasure of great worth,
*So I sent guided people down to earth.'**
 Each miracle which you may now desire,
 He showed to you in order to inspire:
 How many idols did the Prophet break
 His people worshippers of God to make!*
 Were it not for his efforts, wouldn't you 370
 Still worship idols like men used to do?
 From bowing down to idols you've been freed
 To learn His rightful claim from the true creed.
 If you should speak, give thanks for this salvation,
 Gain, from your inner idol, liberation!
 From idols now your head has been unchained,
 So free your heart too with the strength you've gained.
 You don't give thanks for faith, it's plain to see
 That is because He gave you it for free—

Wealth's value heirs fail to appreciate:

375

Rostam faced trials, Zal got things on a plate.*

God said, 'My mercy's moved when humans cry—

The weeper then drinks grace which I supply.

I don't show what I don't want to impart;

Once someone's hooked I open up his heart.

My mercy's subject to the weeper's cries—

When he weeps, waves from mercy's seas then rise.'

Shaikh Ahmad-e Khazrui buys sweets for his
creditors through divine inspiration*

There was a shaikh in debt continually,

Because he was so fond of chivalry:

Huge loans from wealthy people he agreed

380

And spent them on the poor and those in need.

He built a Sufi lodge with money lent—

His life and wealth in God's way thus he spent.

God paid his debts for him across the land,

As He made flour for Abraham from sand.*

'In each bazaar,' the Prophet used to say,

'There are two angels who together pray:

"God give big-spenders back some extra cash,

But make the misers' money turn to ash!"

This fits best one who spends with his own life

385

And gives his throat to the Creator's knife:

Like Ishmael he surrenders his neck, but

The knife no longer has the power to cut.*

Since martyrs live on, joyful, free, and well,*

Don't look just at their corpses, infidel!

God has bestowed eternal life, one free

From any struggle, pain, and misery.

The debtor shaikh for years lived in this way:

A go-between, he'd take then give away.

He sowed such good seeds till the day he died,

390

That he might die a saint who's glorified.

When the shaikh's life approached his final breath,
 In his own being he sensed signs of death;
 His creditors sat round him on that day,
 While, like a candle, he would melt away.
 They all became so bitter sitting there,
 Counting the cost and feeling deep despair.
 'Look at these evil-thinking men!' he said,
 'Can they not be paid back by God instead?'
 They heard a boy shout 'Halva, here!' outside, 395
 To raise its price he'd praise his stock with pride.
 The shaikh then told his servant: 'Go and buy
 The halva from the boy who just passed by—
 My creditors can eat it joyfully,
 And, free from bitterness, then look at me.'
 Immediately the servant went outside
 To buy the halva as he'd specified.
 He asked the boy, 'How much does that come to?'
 'Just over half a dinar, friend, for you.'
 'Don't overcharge the dervishes!' he said, 400
 'I'll give you half a dinar, boy, instead!'
 The boy then placed beside the shaikh his tray—
 The shaikh's mysterious ways I'll now convey:
 He signalled to his creditors to eat
 By saying, 'God has blessed this lawful treat!'
 Once it was emptied, waiting still in there
 The boy said, 'Give the price agreed as fair!'
 The shaikh said, 'I have no more cash to give—
 I'm deep in debt, and don't have long to live!'
 The boy then slammed the tray down on the floor, 405
 And started to lament, cry out, and roar;
 The boy sobbed loudly over this shaikh's trick:
 'Would that my leg had broken like a stick
 Or I had walked towards a pile of trash
 Than near this Sufi thief who has no cash!
 Gluttonous Sufis, greedy and spoilt brats,
 You're dogs, but falsely clean yourselves like cats!'
 Due to his screaming, which was loud and wild,
 Everyone came and gathered round this child.

He told the shaikh, 'You act so cruelly;
You know full well my boss will punish me!
If I go empty-handed, I'll be killed—
Will you allow this? Will you feel fulfilled?'
The creditors could not believe their eyes:
'What is the meaning of these tricks and lies?
You've spent our loans, and soon they'll go with you;
Now you treat a poor child unjustly too!'
The boy stood weeping till the call to prayer,
The shaikh just closed his eyes without a care;
Free from all worries, lying in his bed, 410
He drew a sheet above his moon-like head;
Pleased with his fate and his own death's approach,
Heedless of people's gossip and reproach.
If God should smile at someone once, he then
Will not be hurt by bitter looks from men;
He whose eyes God should kiss will truly gain:
Wrath from fate's wheel will never cause him pain.
The bright moon in the sky when it is dark—
What does it care about the dogs that bark?
The dog is doing what it's meant to do; 420
By spreading light around, the moon is too.
Each thing performs its allocated deeds:
Water's not made impure due to some weeds;
Weeds float up on its surface, but the sea
Keeps flowing, undisturbed, perpetually.
The Prophet split the moon once late at night,
While Abu Lahab babbled out of spite;*
When Jesus the Messiah raised the dead,
The angry Jews tore off their beards in dread.
Can the dog's barking reach the moon above, 425
Let alone God's most favoured moon of love?
A king drinks wine to music by the stream—
Why should he hear the frogs when he can dream.

They could have paid that boy quite easily,
But the shaikh stifled generosity,

So none of those rich men would pay the bill—
 The power of masters can be greater still!
 A servant came at the next time to pray,
 From someone generous he'd brought a tray—
 A gift from someone rich and godly too, 430
 Who knew what this shaikh now was going through;
 Four hundred dinars lay one side of it,
 With half a dinar lying opposite.
 The servant stepped up to the shaikh, to say
 His greetings and to hand to him the tray—
 When he removed the tray's lid, everyone
 Could see the miracle that had been done;
 Soon gasps and sighs were all that men could hear:
 'Our shaikh of shaikhs, what's this you've made appear!
 What is the secret? What sheer majesty, 435
 Great lord of lords of every mystery!
 Forgive us, for we didn't understand!
 Confused, we uttered words we hadn't planned.
 Like blind men we waved sticks, and heedlessly
 Broke all the lamps in our vicinity.
 Just like deaf men who haven't heard a word,
 Our reasoned-out responses were absurd;*
 We failed to learn from Moses's mistake,
 Shamed for his disbelief in Khezzr's sake,*
 Though he had such extraordinary vision, 440
 The light of which could penetrate to heaven.
 With mouse-like, half-blind eyes, we stupidly
 Denied what your superior eyes could see.'
 The shaikh said, 'Your reproach and clamour too
 I now forgive as lawful just for you.
 I sought God's help—that was my secret way,
 And, as you saw, He rescued me today.
 God had told me, "That dinar which seems small
 Requires still that the boy should scream and bawl—
 Until the halva-selling boy should cry 445
 My sea of mercy won't be moved on high."'
 The boy stands for your eyes, thus your success
 Depends, my brother, on your own distress—

So if a robe of honour is your aim,
Weep wildly like a child in desperate shame.

*How someone frightened an ascetic, saying:
'Weep less so as not to become blind!'*

A friend told an ascetic: 'Weep much less,
So that your eyes won't feel pain and distress.'
He answered, 'Just two things are possible:
They'll see His beauty, or not see at all.
If they will see God's Light, why should I care? 450
With union can these worthless eyes compare?
If they won't see God, damn them! Never mind—
An eye so miserable is better blind.'
When you have Jesus, eyes have little value;
Don't go astray—an inner eye he'll give you.
Your spirit's Jesus is within, so pure—
Seek help from it, then you can feel secure!
But don't compel your Jesus-pure heart to
Perform the work your body's meant to do,
Like that fool whom we mentioned previously 455
Regarding Jesus and his purity—
Don't ask your Jesus for a body's health.
Don't ask your Moses for vile Pharaoh's wealth.
From your heart keep thought of provisions out,
Stay at the king's court—never be without!
The body is the spirit's tent, its shell,
Or like an ark for Noah—heed this well.
That they might lose their tents why should Turks fear
When to the royal court they are so dear?

*Conclusion of the story about the coming to life of the bones
through Jesus's prayer*

Jesus said God's name over all the bones 460
Because of that young man's persistent moans;
That immature man thus, by God's decree,
Saw bones come back to life incredibly,

But then a lion, not a man, appeared,
 And knocked him down—for his own life he feared!
 It broke his skull, which fell upon the ground—
 It was an empty shell, no brain was found!
 There would have been no harm if he had more
 Than just a body, but there was no core.
 Jesus asked, 'Lion, why leave him for dead?' 465
 'Because he bothered you,' the lion said,
 'But why not drink his blood once he's been killed?'
 'Because that isn't what the Lord has willed.'
 Many like this fierce lion have moved on
 Without consuming what they'd chanced upon:
 Hungry but knowing it was not their share,
 They wouldn't eat although the food was there.
 You have enabled us to do with ease
 Such fruitless work—deliver us now, please!
 We didn't see the hook beneath the bait— 470
 Show us how things are truly, their real state.*
 The lion said, 'Messiah, killing then
 Was just a lesson for the sake of men.
 If in this world I still had time ahead
 I wouldn't be right now among the dead.'
 For one who finds pure water this fate's fit,
 If like a donkey he should dirty it:
 Its value if he knew, he'd put his head
 Inside the stream and not his feet instead.
 The donkey treats like this God's messengers, 475
 The prophets, leaders, and life-nurturers—
 Why won't it die before them with this plea:
 'Revive me now, please, through the order *Be!*'*
 Don't wish long life for your dog-soul, the foe
 Of your pure heart* since very long ago!
 Shame on the bones which hold the good dogs back
 From spiritual goals they know they lack!
 You're not a dog—how come you love bones then?
 Like leeches, why suck up the blood of men?
 What kind of eyes are they which have no sight, 480
 Disgraced in tests since they get nothing right?

Opinions sometimes get it wrong, don't they?
And your opinion's blind to the right way.
You keep on weeping for the others, eye—
Sit down a while and for your own sake cry!
Clouds' tears make branches green and fresh as dew,
Through tears the candle burns much brighter too.
Wherever men mourn you should also sit,
Because to weep and moan you too are fit;
For transient things far off and missed they pine, 485
Not for eternal rubies in God's mine.

Blind imitation locks your heart up, so
Dissolve that lock by letting your tears flow.
Mimicry is the bane of all that's good;
Though it seems like a mountain, it's dead wood.
It is a huge blind man who is unkind—
Consider him mere flesh, since he is blind!
Though his speech should sound finer than a hair,
He doesn't understand his own hot air:
He's drunk on his own words, but far apart 490
Remains the holy wine from his lost heart.
He's like a ditch that water passes through—
He cannot drink, so it finds those who do:
The flowing water won't remain in it
Because the ditch does not feel thirst one bit.
Like a renowned reed-player who is vain—
Rich customers are all he hopes to gain.
In truth, the imitator is the same
As a hired mourner—they've one selfish aim:
He says heart-wrenching words and seems to mourn, 495
But where's his burnt heart and clothes that are torn?
Compare the mimic's with the mystic's heart:
Echoes and David's voice, so far apart;*
The mystic's words stem from his heart which burns,
That mimic second-hand his discourse learns—
Don't be misled by that man's mournful speech:
Oxen bear loads, while cart-wheels only screech.

The mimics are rewarded anyway:

Professional mourners must receive their pay.

Infidels, like believers, shout 'God' too,

500

But there's a difference between the two:

The beggar cries 'God!' for the sake of bread,

The holy man so that his soul is fed.

If he knew what this means, the beggar then

Would never think of 'more' and 'less' again.

In hope of food, he wails 'O God!' all day:

An ass bears the Qur'an in hope of hay!

Had those words on his lips shone in his heart,

This would have made his body split apart—

In magic, demons' names can take effect;

505

God's name why use mere pennies to collect?

*How a peasant stroked a lion in the dark,
imagining it was an ox*

A peasant tied his ox up one dark night;

A lion came and ate it with one bite!

He came to see his ox, but had to look

In every corner and each tiny nook,

And thus he felt the lion's legs and back,

Its side and rear, but it did not attack.

The lion thought, 'If it was now more bright,

His heart would melt, his stomach turn in fright.

For this he's stroking me courageously:

510

He thinks that I'm his ox, since he can't see.'

God tells us, 'Blind, misled fools, have some shame!

Did Sinai not fall crashing at My name?*

For *to the mountain if We'd sent the Book*

*It would have trembled, split, and made all look!**

If Mount Ohod* had heard of me, its heart

Would then have filled with blood and split apart.'

Your parents warned you of this, but instead

You disregarded everything they said.

33

515

musical ceremony

520

525

530

He tasted kindness and let out this cry:
 'Tonight if I don't party, when will I!'

They ate, then in *sama** they started reeling;
 The lodge soon filled with dust up to the ceiling:
 The kitchen's dust and smoke, feet like a drum
 Stamping in rapture and delirium;
 Now waving arms, now stamping feet—elation
 Led them to sweep the floorboards in prostration.
 Sufis will wait long for a few small bites— 535
 That's why they have enormous appetites!
 Except the one who by God's light is sated—
 With begging he won't be humiliated;
 Among the thousands, men like this are rare;
 The rest live off the grace that they should share.
 When the *sama* had finished finally,
 The minstrel started a new melody;
 The chant 'The ass has gone!' once he'd begun,
 He urged the others to join in the fun!
 Stamping their feet in rapture till the dawn, 540
 They clapped their hands and screamed, 'The ass has gone!'
 That Sufi sang in imitation too:
 'The ass has gone! The ass has gone!'—it's true!
 The party ended at the break of day;
 They all said their goodbyes and went away.
 The place soon emptied; there remained the guest,
 Clearing the space where he had meant to rest.
 He took his baggage out then from the cell
 And looked for others travelling as well.
 He then rushed to the stable and there found 545
 His ass was missing, no one was around:
 'That servant must be feeding it,' he thought,
 'Perhaps last night it didn't drink a lot.'
 The servant came, so he asked, 'Where's it gone?'
 'Who cares!' the servant snapped and sauntered on.
 Enraged, he screamed, 'I put it in your care;
 I trusted you, believing you were fair.

I now want back what I left here with you—
Return my ass, as you're obliged to do!
Don't make excuses through theosophy— 550
What I put in your care give back to me!
"The things that you acquire," the Prophet said,
"Must be returned before you're finally dead."
If you refuse and stubbornly won't budge,
You'll have to come with me now to the judge!
The servant said, 'The dervishes passed through;
They mobbed me and I thought I might die too!
Who would leave offal where the wild cats nap,
Then look to see if they have left a scrap!
For scores of hungry men a single bite, 555
One thin cat over which ten dogs will fight!'
'That they used force are you now telling me,
Because they wanted to cause harm to me?
Why didn't you come looking for me then
To tell me that my ass was with those men?
I could have seized my ass back thanks to you,
And they might have agreed to pay me too—
When they were here it was still valuable,
But now they've scattered, it's impossible!
Whom should I take now to the judge, too late! 560
It's due to you that this has been my fate.
Why then did you not even try to shout:
"A wicked crime has just been carried out!"'
He said, 'I came so many times, I swear,
To tell you all about this sad affair,
But you were chanting then, "The ass has gone!"
With such great zeal, and you went on and on!
I went back, thinking: "He knows what occurred;
He's wise and still content though he has heard."''
'They chanted happily,' the guest then said, 565
'The joy of chanting soon filled up my head.
I've been defeated through vile imitation—
May it be cursed with a complete damnation!
Especially imitation of vile men—
Abraham's wrath curse *those that set* * again!

The ecstasy of that group radiated,
 Then my heart felt it, and it imitated!
 Reflections from God's Friends you need at first
 In His pure ocean's depths to quench your thirst.
 The first reflection cast is imitation; 570
 Once it's successive then it's realization.
 Until this point don't part from His true friends—
 Don't break the shell until the pearl's growth ends!
 Pure eyes, pure ears, and pure minds to acquire,
 Tear up now all the veils of base desire!
 Since base desire made this man imitate,
 To his mind no pure light would radiate;
 Desire for music, food, and merriment
 From knowledge was his brain's impediment—
 If such desire stays on the mirror's face, 575
 Like us, that mirror must be a disgrace:
 If weighing-scales for gold should feel some lust,
 How will they give a reading we can trust?
 Each prophet told his people what was true:
 'I don't want payment for what I've brought you;
 I'm just a guide; God is your purchaser;
 Though I'm His agent, He's your customer.*
 What is my wage? Seeing the Lord one day,
 Though Abu Bakr all his wealth might pay—
 His forty thousand coins is not for me; 580
 Stones can't match Aden's pearls in quality!'*

Now listen to this tale I'll share with you,
 To learn how lust can block your ears up too.
 Desire makes people stammer—if some stays,
 One's heart and eye can't then receive God's rays.
 The thought of gold and status harms your eyes
 Like a stray hair; to all men this applies
 Except the drunkard filled with God, for he,
 Though offered massive treasures, will stay free:
 This world will seem a carcass in the sight 585
 Of those who gain true vision through God's light.

That Sufi was far from true drunkenness,
For he'd turned blind through greed and lustfulness.
One dazed by greed a hundred tales may hear,
But not one point will enter his deaf ear!

*How the announcers serving the judge spread
news around town about a bankrupt*

A bankrupt, homeless man in ancient times
Was kept in gaol for all his petty crimes.
That wastrel ate the other prisoners' food
And burdened them with his vain attitude—
No one would even dare to start their meal 590
In case it tempted him to come and steal.
(Those not invited to God's feast on high,
Though they be kings, gaze with a beggar's eye.)
This demon stamped on generosity,
He made gaol hell through his dishonesty—
If you should run away to find relief,
There also you are bound to suffer grief;
Free from wild beasts and traps there is no place,
No peace but in retreat with God's pure grace.
The prison of this world where you must live 595
Demands an entry-fee you have to give.
If you hide in a mouse-hole, please beware,
For someone with cat's claws will scratch you there.
Man can escape through his imagination,
By contemplating beauty in creation,
But should he focus on the ugly here,
Like wax inside a fire, he'll disappear.
If you find snakes and scorpions everywhere,
Don't worry—God will keep you in His care:
The snakes and scorpions will show amity, 600
For His thought is the greatest alchemy.
Through optimism, patience can taste sweet,
For then relief and joy is what you'll meet:

By faith, relief is formed inside your brain;
 Weakness of faith brings deep despair and pain.
 Patience acquires from faith a crown of gold—
 ‘No patience means no faith,’ we have been told:
 ‘God has not granted faith,’ the Prophet said,
 ‘To him who has no patience in his head.’

That one who looks just like a snake to you 605
 Is beautiful in someone else’s view,
 That he’s an infidel you may surmise,
 He’s a believer, though, in others’ eyes;
 Both are observed in him when people look:
 He’s now a fish, and then a baited hook,
 He’s half-believer and half-infidel,
 Half-greedy, half-renunciant as well.
 ‘Some of you are believers’, God told you,
 And ‘Some of you are unbelievers’* too.
 Just like a cow, black on one side, but white 610
 The other side like the full moon at night—
 Whoever sees the black side turns away,
 Whoever sees the white side runs that way.
 Joseph was worthless in his brothers’ sight,
 Though Jacob saw him in a better light;
 Through bad thoughts, he seemed ugly in their view—
 They didn’t have the inner vision too:
 Outer eyes are the inner eyes’ reflection,
 For outer eyes are under their direction.
 You’re in the realm of space now, but before 615
 You were beyond space—open up that door!
 In this world of dimensions, you’re not free,
 You’re trapped here in check-mate perpetually!

Prisoners complain about the bankrupt to the agent of the judge

To see the judge’s agent prisoners came
 With their complaints, and to assign the blame:

'Our greetings to the great judge! Please relate
What we endure from this man whom we hate,
Because in gaol he chooses to remain
And he's a greedy nuisance, proud and vain.
He's there at every meal just like a fly, 620
Though uninvited, shameless, nose raised high.
A feast for sixty to this pig seems small,
He claims he's deaf when you say "Stop! That's all!"
Not one bite reaches any other men,
But even if one finds a scrap, just then
The greedy demon grabs it from your hand,
And says, "God ordered, '*Eat!*'* Heed his command!"
Please end this famine that we now endure,
And may the judge live long and be secure!
Either throw out this buffalo who steals 625
Or start a fund to pay for all his meals!
You are the means for all our happiness—
We beg you, please relieve us from distress!

The agent went to see the judge that day
To share all the complaints he'd heard them say.
The judge then called the bankrupt from his cell
And questioned his own officers as well.
All of the things they had complained about
Were proven to the judge beyond a doubt.
'Pack up and leave the gaol!' the judge then said, 630
'Return now to your own vile home instead!'
'My home's your kindness,' he said, 'Gaol's not hell
But paradise for this blind infidel;
If you expel me I will die out there
Of destitution—nobody will care.'
He talked like Satan, who begged, 'God be praised!
*Reprieve me till the day that they're all raised!**
I'm happy in this prison down below,
Where I can slay the children of my foe:
If someone has faith's nourishment and bread 635
As his provisions for the path ahead,

I'll seize it with my trickery and guile
 And make him feel regretful all the while;
 I'll threaten him with abject poverty,
 Or send those who can flirt seductively.'

The stock of faith's provisions here is small
 And that vile dog is threatening it all—
 If you taste faith's gift when you fast and pray,
 This wretched thief will snatch it straight away.

From Satan I beg God to rescue me;

640

We've suffered from that devil's tyranny!

He enters millions, though he is alone;

Each one he enters then becomes his clone:

If someone leaves you cold, know he's within—

The devil's lurking underneath his skin.

When not in forms, he enters thoughts instead,

So that through fancies into sin you're led—

Now thought of fun, now thought of your professions,

Now thought of knowledge, now thought of possessions.

To beg '*God give me strength!*' you now must start,

645

Not merely with your tongue, but in your heart.

The judge said, 'Prove you're penniless to me!'

'The prisoners can confirm my bankruptcy.'

'What they allege can't be believed as true,

Because they want now to be rid of you;

They want you banished somewhere far away—

We can't accept what men like that should say!'

The people at the courthouse swore that he

Was bankrupt and a vile monstrosity.

All of the men the judge consulted said,

650

'Sir, wash your hands of this broke rogue instead!'

The judge said, 'Take him round the town—proclaim:

"This is a bankrupt rogue deserving blame!"

Announce his bankruptcy and start to beat

The drums to spread the news on every street!

Let no one give him credit at his store,
Nor lend one penny to him any more;
And then if someone should come to complain,
I still won't throw him into gaol again!
His bankruptcy is proven now to me— 655
He owns no cash nor goods, as all can see.'
In this world's gaol we humans have been thrown
So that our bankruptcy can be made known.
In the Qur'an have you not heard God tell
That Satan is a bankrupt rogue as well?
That he's a bankrupt liar and a cheat?
Avoid his company or taste defeat!
If you should turn to him in your distress,
How will he help you when he's penniless?

They grabbed the camel that a poor Kurd used 660
While selling firewood, but this man refused;
For hours, complaining, this poor Kurd then cried,
To bribe the officers he also tried,
But still they seized the camel from this Kurd
That afternoon, as though they hadn't heard.
On the poor camel sat the bankrupt man,
Behind the pair the Kurdish owner ran.
They went from street to street at rapid pace
Till everyone could recognize his face—
At every bathhouse and each market stall, 665
This man's appearance soon was known to all.
Ten criers who could holler with loud shrieks,
Including Turks and Arabs, Kurds and Greeks,
Announced: 'He's broke! He has no cash at all,
So no one give him loans, however small.
He's empty outside and within, take heed!
He is a bankrupt cheat who's ruled by greed.
Don't deal with him, for guile he doesn't lack—
If he sells something he will steal it back!
If you then bring him to be tried, you'll fail— 670
The judge will not send this corpse back to gaol!

He's crafty and his stomach's never full;
 Though he pretends, he's not so pitiful:
 He borrows fancy clothes he likes to wear,
 To fool vain people who are unaware:
 Wise words when spoken by a stupid man
 Are borrowed clothes—take heed now while you can!
 A thief with silk robes still can't shake your hand—
 They've cut his hands off!* Don't you understand?'

The thief came down at the end of the day, 675
 The owner said, 'My home is far away;
 You rode the camel which belongs to me,
 So I demand at least a modest fee.'
 'What have we all been doing?' he replied.
 'Where is your brain? Hello! No one inside?
 News of my bankruptcy has filled the sky
 But somehow you have let it pass you by;
 Your ears were blocked, stuffed with false hopes of gain;
 Hope makes blind fools turn deaf—it is your bane!
 Even mere bricks heard the announcer say: 680
 "This pimp is bankrupt, so please keep away!"'
 They'd shouted this all day, but still the Kurd,
 Immersed in vain hopes, hadn't caught a word.
 'God's seal is on their hearing and their sight,'*
 Behind their veils are forms that bring delight;
 He lets your eyes see only His selection
 Of loving glances, beauty, and perfection;
 He gives your ears a share, as with your eyes,
 Of His glad tidings, music, and deep cries.
 This world has many remedies it stores, 685
 But, first, God has to open up the doors;
 Though you're now unaware, He'll make you see
 When you feel that you need it desperately:
 The Prophet said, 'Our Noble God, who heals,
 Has made a cure for every pain Man feels.'
 But you won't see a trace of your pain's cure
 Unless He wishes—you're that insecure.

Find Placelessness, you who seek remedies,
Like one about to die who finally sees.
This world appeared from the Dimensionless* 690
And it has taken form from Placelessness—
From being to Non-being* now return,
If you seek God and with divine love burn.
Non-being is where you can earn, my friend,
But in our transient world you only spend:
Non-being is God's workshop; there's no gain
In this realm, which holds naught but what is vain.
Teach us, Dear Friend, fine words that we can say
To gain Your mercy every time we pray!
Both prayers and their answers come from You, 695
Security's from You and terror too.
If we have erred, correct ways please now teach!
You're the Corrector and the Lord of Speech.
With alchemy You can transmute what's vile,
Transform a stream of blood into the Nile;
Your work is to perform such alchemy;
No one else knows this special chemistry:
You mixed together water once with clay
And moulded Adam's body in this way;
You gave him lineage, and a perfect mate, 700
All kinds of thoughts, and every mood and state.
To some You've shown a way unto relief:
You've let them separate from joy and grief,
And from themselves and their own families.
You've made fair things look foul to men like these:
What senses can perceive they choose to shun,
For they depend on the Unseen Pure One.
Their Lover's hidden, though their love is clear:
Their Lover is beyond, their suffering here.
Escape from here! Love of forms in this place 705
Is not for forms themselves like a girl's face;
In truth, love's not inspired by forms you see,
Though it seems like it superficially—
Why else would you abandon forms you love
The moment that their souls ascend above?

Their forms persist, so why must your love end?
 Find out who your beloved is, my friend!
 If the Beloved were perceptible,
 For all to love Him would be possible.
 Love grows through faithfulness that will not tire— 710
 A changing object such love can't inspire:
 A ray of sunlight shines across a wall,
 It's just a temporary loan, that's all—
 Why give your heart to a mere wall of clay?
 Seek the light's source which shines each single day!
 You love your own mind and think you're superior
 To those who worship just a form's exterior—
 Your intellect is one ray of God's light;
 It's gold on copper, borrowed for one night.
 Beauty in humans is like borrowed gold; 715
 That's why your sweetheart turns so pale and old—
 An angel suffered thus a steep descent*
 Because his loveliness was merely lent.
 Such lovely beauty fades eventually,
 Just as a young shoot withers gradually:
*We make him live long, then turn back to die:**
 Look for the heart! Mere bones can't satisfy!
 Our inner beauty's not a transient thing—
 It's nourished by the Water of Life's* spring;
 He's Saki,* Life's Draught and the drunkard too— 720
 All three become one when you're rid of 'you'.*
 You can't know that One by analogy—
 Act like His slave and stop your idiocy!
 For you, reality is forms in time;
 You still delight in niceties like rhyme.*
 In truth, reality's what charms your soul
 And makes you see forms are dispensable;
 It isn't that which makes men deaf and blind,
 Increasing love of forms in humankind:
 The blind have fancies which increase frustration; 725
 True sight is vision through annihilation.

The literal Qur'an is for the blind;
They've lost their ass, and grasp what's left behind:
Since you have vision, seek the ass which fled,
And not the empty saddle left instead!
The saddle you will find too on its back:
When you possess a soul, food you'll not lack.
Upon its back rests transient wealth and gain;
The heart's pearl's worth much more and will remain—
Ride bareback on the donkey now, you dunce! 730
Didn't the Prophet ride in this way once?
The Prophet did ride bareback—that is true;
He also went on foot a great deal too.
Tether your donkey-soul with rope that's strong—
How long will it evade hard work, how long?
Patience and gratitude your ass must learn,
Even if it takes decades to discern.
No porter bore a fellow porter's load,
No one has ever reaped unless he's sowed—
That is an immature hope, so grow up! 735
Raw food that's rotten makes you soon throw up!
Don't say, 'That man found treasure suddenly;
That's what I want—hard work is not for me!
That was his stroke of fortune, which is rare;
While you have strength you have to earn your share.
Work won't prevent such fortune—that's a fact;
Don't stop your work: good luck it can attract!
Don't be a victim of 'If only . . .', brat:
Don't say, 'If only I'd done this or that!'
The Prophet stopped men making this lament: 740
'It's sheer hypocrisy'—by this he meant:
Sobbing 'If only . . .' with their final breath
Gives hypocrites a most remorseful death.

Parable

A man searched for a home once hurriedly.
A friend led him to ruined property

And said, 'If this just had a roof, you could
 Live next to me then—wouldn't that be good!
 Your family would be so comfortable
 If adding one more room were possible.'
 The man replied, 'Yes, that would be such fun,
 One can't live off "If only . . ." though, can one?' 745
 All people are in search of happiness,
 And, due to false hopes, they feel deep distress.
 Both young and old are searching hard for gold,
 But real from false can't easily be told:
 When rays shine in your heart, look carefully,
 Don't guess they're gold without the means to see!
 If you've a touchstone, then you can decide,
 If not, then pledge yourself to a true guide.
 Inside your soul a touchstone you must own; 750
 If you don't know the path, don't go alone!
 The ghouls' screams sound like calling from a friend,
 But they will only drag you to your end;
 One of them screams, 'Hey caravan, come here!
 The signposts make the path to me so clear.'
 The ghoul will use your name: 'Hey so-and-so!'
 To make you fall through this deceptive show!
 You'll meet the wolf if you should take this bait,
 Your whole life lost, far off and getting late.
 What is the ghoul's way? What should one expect? 755
 It says, 'I want wealth, status, and respect.'
 Don't let these voices in, to them stay sealed,
 So that the mysteries can be revealed;
 And chant God's name* to drown the ghoul's shrill cry,
 Away from this base vulture turn your eye!
 Recognize false dawns from the dawn that's true,
 The colour of the glass from the wine's hue,
 So that, from those eyes which see colours here,
 Restraint will make an inner eye appear:
 You will see different colours few have seen 760
 And bright pearls in the place where stones have been;
 What are mere pearls when you'll become the ocean
 And that bright sun with its revolving motion!

The Craftsman's in His workshop far from view—

You must transcend beyond to see Him too.

Since work throws on the Craftsman its own veil,

To see beyond the work you then will fail.

The workshop is the Craftsman's place—beware,

Whoever stays outside stays unaware!

Enter the workshop of annihilation,

765

To see the Craftsman and His fine creation!

Within the workshop vision is so clear,

While all is veiled and hidden over here.

His self-existence Pharaoh kept in mind

And to His workshop therefore he stayed blind;

That's why he felt he could change destiny,

To make fate turn back from his door and flee,

But fate was chuckling at his schemes instead,

Although it hid it, and could not be read:

Innocent babies by the score he killed

770

To try to change what God Himself had willed—

So Moses wouldn't stand up to his rule,

He murdered thousands, for he was so cruel.

Though he killed thousands, Moses thrived and learned

How to deal Pharaoh the defeat he'd earned.

If Pharaoh had seen God decides, he'd not

Have even thought up such a wicked plot.

In Pharaoh's house lived Moses safe and sound

While Pharaoh killed the other children found:

He strengthened his own body, due to fear

775

The real threat was another standing near—

'That one's a jealous enemy,' he'd claim,

But his own body was in fact to blame,

For Pharaoh then had Moses by his side

And yet would shout, 'Where does my foe now hide?'

Within you, your own self feels such delight

When you attack another man through spite.

*How the people blamed a man who killed his mother
on suspicion of adultery*

An angry man took his own mother's life
 By using his bare fists and a sharp knife.
 'You are so evil!' someone said that night, 780
 'You've just ignored your mother's basic right.
 Why did you kill her? Tell me if you can!
 What did she do, you evil-natured man?'
 'She did the act deserving of most blame;
 I killed her, so the ground would hide her shame.'
 'You should have killed the men—they should all pay!'
 'I'd have to kill a different man each day!
 I killed her not to murder more instead:
 One dead is better than a thousand dead.'
 Your self's the source of evil ways—beware! 785
 The wickedness of it is everywhere!
 Kill it, for due to that self which is base,
 Each breath you strike a good man in the face!
 The vast world seems so narrow due to it,
 And so with God you fight and foes you hit.
 If you kill it, from censure you'll be free—
 You'll then not have a single enemy.
 If you take issue with what I convey
 About the prophets and the saints, and say:
 'Didn't the prophets kill their carnal souls 790
 Yet still face foes, though they'd fulfilled their roles?'
 Now listen, seeker of what is correct,
 To answers to your doubts, and then reflect:
 Prophet-rejecters were their own worst foes:
 Upon themselves they thus inflicted blows.
 The ones who murder are the enemies,
 Not those who undergo more agonies.
 The bat is not the sun's foe—it would fail;
 It is its own foe, blinded by its veil.
 That bat is killed by radiance from the sun— 795
 How could the sun be harmed by that small one?

The one from whom comes torment is the foe,
One who'd block rubies from the sun's bright glow:
Infidels block themselves from every ray
The prophets, like rare jewels, shine their way—
How can this veil great mystics of this kind?
The infidels just make their own eyes blind.
They're like the Indian slave with too much pride—
To spite his master he tries suicide:
The slave jumps headfirst from the roof one day 800
To make his master suffer loss this way!
If a sick man becomes his doctor's foe,
If a child hates his teacher, it is so—
In truth it's self-abuse and robbery:
They've robbed themselves of brain power stupidly.
If bleachers fall out with the sun's bright light,
Or fish start fights with water through sheer spite,
Who will lose out? Who really will have paid?
At the end of the day, whose star will fade?
If in an ugly form the Lord made you, 805
Then don't be ugly in your nature too!
If your shoes rip, don't walk on rough terrain:
Don't make a problem bigger—use your brain!
'I'm less than him!' you cry out jealously,
'That man makes me feel inferiority!'
Such jealousy is a huge flaw and curse;
Than all deficiencies this one's much worse.
The devil felt so much humiliation
He threw himself into far worse damnation:
He wished to be superior but was cursed,* 810
And now he sucks our blood with his deep thirst.
The Prophet one day put Bu Jahl to shame—
He made more claims, through envy, all the same;
Bu'l-Hakam turned into Bu Jahl this way;*
Envy makes men unworthy every day.
There's nothing better to possess, you'll find,
Than natures which are envy-free and kind.
God made the prophets intermediaries,
So that they would reveal men's jealousies:

Since none could feel with God a rivalry, 815
 Of God no one felt envious obviously,
 But those with whom they would themselves compare
 To envy and compete with men would dare.
 The Prophet's greatness now is obvious;
 No longer can a man feel envious.

There is a saint for every era, friend;
 This test continues till the very end:
 Those with good natures will be liberated,
 But those with frail hearts will be devastated.
 The saint is the Imam who'll rise each age; 820
 From Ali and Omar's line comes this sage;*
 Seeker, he is the guide and Mahdi too,
 Both hidden and right here in front of you!*
 With wisdom as his Gabriel,* he's the light;
 The lesser saint is like his lamp, less bright;
 Below the lamp the niche* ranks; you might say
 The light has its gradations in this way:
 God's Light has seven hundred veils, my friend—
 These veils of light are levels to ascend.
 A group of saints behind each veil you'll find, 825
 Leading to the Imam, in rank they're lined.
 The lowest rank, due to deficient sight,
 Are those who cannot bear more of the light;
 The next rank, due to their own weakness too,
 More radiance than their limit cannot view;
 That light, which for the top rank grants new life,
 To the squint-eyed brings only pain and strife.
 Impaired sight can improve eventually:
 Once you've passed every veil you'll reach the sea.
 How can the iron foundry's hot fire suit 830
 An apple, quince, or similar type of fruit?
 Fruits ripen with a little warmth, not fire—
 A furnace's heat fruit does not require.
 For iron that amount of heat's too low;
 The fire of dragons it can undergo—

This iron is the Sufi who bears trials;
Under the hammer and the flames he smiles;
The fire's own chamberlain won't stay apart—
Without a guard he enters the fire's heart.
Without a medium, it's impossible 835
For you to heat your water up at all:
The medium needed is the pan you heat;
It's like the sandals you wear on your feet,
Or the surrounding air that is so hot
It can itself heat water in a pot.
The Sufi has no medium, nor resistance:
The flames directly heat his whole existence;
And if the world's a body, he's its heart;
Only through him can this world's real work start.
Without the heart how can the body talk? 840
Without its wish to move how can one walk?
Iron is where the sparks are seen to dart:
God is seen, not in bodies, but the heart.
Our hearts are like a body from this view
Next to the saint's heart, which is their source too.
This needs examples or an explanation,
But I've no faith in men's imagination,
Which might deem my good deeds depravity,
Although my words are selfless charity—
What's best for a bent foot is a bent shoe; 845
The beggar knocked—I've done all I can do.

How a king tested two slaves whom he had just purchased

A king bought two slaves cheaply, then one day
Listened to what the first one had to say.
He found him clever and well-spoken too—
From sugar lips sweet water's what flows through.
Each person is concealed beneath his tongue;
This curtain over their soul's gate is hung,
But when speech, like the wind, pulls it apart,
It shows the secrets hidden in the heart—

Is there a pearl or just some wheat instead? 850
 Some gold or snakes and scorpions left unfed?
 Or treasure with a serpent curled around—
 Treasure unguarded who has ever found?
 Without preparing this slave spoke the way
 That others can if they rehearse all day,
 As if within him were a vast, deep sea,
 Which scattered pearls of wisdom constantly.
 The light that shines from every pearl-like heart
 Shows how to tell the true from false apart;
 The light of the Criterion* gives such vision 855
 To show the truth from falsehood with precision.
 If this pearl's light should give sight to our eyes,
 You'd hear from us both questions and replies!
 You see two moons due to your failing sight;
 This vision makes you question now what's right—
 Correct your sight through moonbeams, to perceive
 The moon as one—the answer then receive!
 Command your thoughts: 'Don't be cross-eyed this way!'

When answers enter your heart through your ear, 860
 Your eye tells you: 'Ignore it—listen here!'

The eye tastes union which the ear can't reach—
 Eyes see through ecstasy, ears hear mere speech;
 Attributes change through what the ears can hear,
 Essences through things which to eyes appear:
 If all you know of fire is what men say,
 Get cooked in flames and you'll learn more this way.
 It's not true certainty until you burn—
 Sit in the fire, true certainty to earn.

When ears learn to perceive, they turn to eyes; 865
 The order '*Say!*'* is trapped there otherwise.
 This talk could go on, but let's now return
 What that king did with his two slaves to learn.

*The king sends away one of the slaves and
interrogates the other*

When the young slave's intelligence grew clear,
He signalled to the other to come near
(I've called him 'young' because that is endearing—
When old men say 'my son' they are not sneering).
The second slave obeyed as slaves must do,
He had a filthy mouth and black teeth too;
Although this made the ruler feel unwell, 870
This slave's deep secrets he sought out as well.
'With your looks and your filthy mouth,' he said,
'Don't sit near me, but over there instead!
For you're my scribe, and that's our only link—
You're not a friend with whom I'd share a drink.
You'll be the patient for this skilled physician,
Who'll try to cure your mouth of its condition.
It's wrong to burn a rug due to one flea:
It would be wrong to shun you equally.
Now sit down with us for a while, and share 875
Some stories, to reveal the brain in there.'
He sent the first slave to the bathhouse then,
And said, 'Scrub well, and come to me again.'
He told the ugly slave: 'You're smart—well done!
You're worth a hundred slaves not merely one.
You're not as bad as that slave tried to claim
When he would jealously give you the blame,
Saying, "He's crooked and he's stolen much;
He's bent and cowardly and such and such!"'
This slave said, 'He speaks always truthfully; 880
No man I've met has shown more honesty.
It is his nature to tell just what's true—
Refuting him I'm not prepared to do;
I don't think he's corrupt; grace fills his head—
I'd rather just suspect myself instead!
Perhaps he can detect in me some flaws
Which I can't see myself due to some cause?'

Whoever sees his own faults, if he's wise,
 Will strive in self-reform until he dies.
 Most men are heedless of themselves, my brother, 885
 That's why they pick at faults seen in another:
 'Form-worshipper, I don't see my own face—
 I see yours, and you see mine in its place!'
 Whoever sees his true soul deep inside
 Has more light than all creatures far and wide;
 Though he should die, his sight will last forever—
 His vision is the eye of the Creator;
 The light with which this man sees his own face
 Is not the light we sense, but purest grace.

The king said, 'All his flaws expose to me 890
 The way he spoke about you previously,
 So I can tell if you're my intimate,
 And fit to serve as my associate.'
 He said, 'I'll tell you of his faults, although
 He is by far the best man that I know.
 His faults are kindness, love, and loyalty,
 Deep friendship, knowledge, and sincerity;
 A tiny fault is he's too generous—
 He'd give his life because he's chivalrous.'
 A hundred thousand lives God will bestow; 895
 If you're not chivalrous you'll never know:
 How can you be so miserly with life,
 If you have seen the light—why choose this strife?
 Water is hoarded by fools on the shore
 Who cannot see the ocean offers more.
 The Prophet said, 'If you knew certainly
 That your reward on Judgment Day would be
 Ten times as good as what He's granted here,
 You'd constantly be generous with good cheer.'
 Chivalrous men can see the change ahead— 900
 This knowledge rids them of all fear and dread.
 Meanness is failure to see what's in store—
 Seeing the pearl makes divers' spirits soar;

No one should be a miser here today,
For no one gambles all for naught away.
Thus eyes inspire all acts of chivalry;
This realm's transcended by the visionary.

'He also lacks conceit,' the slave then said.

'He looks for faults within himself instead:
He is his own worst critic; I have seen
Him kind to all, though to himself he's mean.'
The king said, 'Don't rush to extol his ways
And, in the process, offer such self-praise,
For I'll see him again soon all the same—
And so you might yourself be put to shame.'

905

*Out of sincerity and fidelity to his friend the
slave swears that his opinions are true*

He said, 'I swear that's not the case at all,
By the King of this world, the Merciful,
Who sent the prophets not due to His need,
But as an act of grace, so we'd be freed,
The Mighty Lord who out of lowly clay
Created glorious heroes of the way!
He cleansed them of the nature of terrestrials
And made them even overtake celestials—
From fire he turned them into purest light,
Sent them above the rest and far from sight.
*That lightning flash** reached spirits from His kingdom,
So, from it, Adam could acquire much wisdom;
What Adam missed Seth afterwards collected,
And so as his successor was selected;
When Noah found this jewel, then joyfully
He scattered pearls across the spirit's sea;
Abraham's soul, due to this powerful light,
Walked into flames without a trace of fright;*

910

915

When Ishmael fell into its stream, he laid
 His head before his father's sharpened blade;*
 David's soul warmed thanks to this pure light's glow—
 His iron loom then melted just like snow;*
 To Solomon when this light union gave,
 Each demon then became his faithful slave;*
 When Jacob bowed to fate submissively, 920
 Through Joseph's scent his eyes again could see;*
 While moon-faced Joseph saw that sun's bright beams
 And learnt how to interpret people's dreams;*
 And when the rod in Moses's right hand
 Found light, it showed how small was Pharaoh's land;*
 When Jesus found it, he rose up from here,
 Like on a ladder, to the highest sphere;*
 And once Mohammad had received this boon,
 In just one second he then split the moon;*
 By Abu Bakr when this was perceived 925
 "Veracious" was the name that he received;*
 And, through the real beloved, with his heart
 Omar learnt to tell true from false apart;*
 When to Osman's eyes such light was bestowed,
 He gained two lights* from rays which overflowed;
 Ali dispersed pearls once he'd seen His face,
 As God's own lion* in the realm of grace;
 Jonayd saw his own army* was so vast,
 Then this great Sufi countless stations passed;
 When Bayazid saw God's grace as the aim, 930
 God made "The Pole of Mystics"* his new name;
 And when Karkhi watched over this deep stream,*
 He led all mystics—his soul was supreme;
 Prince Ebn-e Adham rode his horse this way
 And turned into the greatest king that day,*
 Once he'd traversed this path, Shaiq became
 The sun of judgement and earned much acclaim.*
 Thousands of hidden kings, who'll never die,
 Live in the other world with heads held high;
 Their names are hidden through God's jealousy— 935
 Not every beggar reads them easily!

I swear by those made of pure light from Him,
Such men are fish which in His ocean swim
(To call Him "Ocean Soul" does not seem right,
I'm looking for a better name tonight).
By Him from Whom all things emerge as well,
A kernel next to Whom seems like a shell,
My fellow slave's good traits a hundred fold
Exceed this small amount that I have told.
What I know of my comrade's virtues, king, 940
You won't believe, as they're astonishing!

The king said, 'What are your own qualities?
Tell us and stop describing his now, please!
What do you have? Display your gains to me.
Which pearl have you discovered in the sea?
After death, sense perception is in vain—
Have you the soul's light, through which hearts can gain?
When in the grave earth robs your eyes of sight—
Do you have what can give your vision light?
And when your limbs are torn off on that day, 945
Will you have spirit wings to fly away?
When this vile bestial soul dies with no trace,
You'll need a soul which lives on in its place—
*Whoever comes with good deeds** will gain more,
If they've done good for God, not as a chore.
In essence are you human or an ass?
Will you reach God when all effects must pass?
Transient things, like fasting and the prayer,
Since they don't last, must vanish in thin air.
Such things up to the Lord you cannot raise, 950
But sickness from your essence they erase,
And by such acts your essence is improved;
Through abstinence diseases are removed.
Striving in abstinence can change effects—
The bitter mouth's made sweet, for it perfects.
Through farming, soil can turn to crops you eat;
Cream makes your hair curl up like fields of wheat,

While sex is just a pretext which soon ends—
 Its purpose is the child that's born, my friends:
 If once a camel and a horse should mate, 955
 It's for the colt's birth at a later date;
 Planting an orchard is done simply so
 The aim's fulfilled, that juicy fruit should grow;
 Alchemy is a mere technique to me—
 Present the gold produced through alchemy!
 And burnishing is no more than the means
 Of purifying objects when one cleans.
 You claim "I did that act, beyond dispute!"
 So show us your results, the orchard's fruit.
 Be silent! Showing off like that is base! 960
 Don't slay a shadow in a camel's place!

He answered, 'King, with anguish my heart bleeds
 On hearing your dismissal of good deeds:
 Dear king, despair will make your slave's heart burn,
 If the good deeds he sends will not return.'
 If there's no transfer at the Resurrection,
 Our words and deeds are vain—we face rejection;
 Each accident should change to a new guise
 That Hour—with new existence they should rise.
 Each thing transforms to what's appropriate: 965
 For herds a shepherd seems the perfect fit.
 At Resurrection all things gain new forms,
 Which are well-ordered, based on certain norms.
 Weren't you an accident once just the same,
 The writhing of your parents with one aim?
 Look at the buildings that men can erect—
 They're born in the mind of the architect:
 This house which seemed so fine to us, whose doors
 Were well-proportioned like its roof and floors—
 An accident, the architect's mere thought, 970
 The tools and all the pillars here has brought.
 What then is every worthwhile thing's first source?
 It is a fancy or a thought, of course.

Each atom you see in the world today
Was once produced by accidents this way.
First comes the thought and then the action, friend,
The world was formed like this—please comprehend!
Fruits are just inner thoughts initially,
Though they're made visible eventually.
After we plant a tree, it's probable 975
Our primary aim will be made visible—
Its branches, leaves, and roots appear first, though
They all are sent just for the fruit to grow;
And thus the secret of the heavens too
Became known as the lord of '*But for you*'.*
This speech gives accidents a transformation,
Just like your favourite parable's narration.
All things were accidents once, such that they
Can show the truth of '*Has there been one day?*'*
From images all accidents come here; 980
And thoughts made those first images appear—
This world's one thought from the Whole Intellect;
Images are the envoys He'll select.
This world is just the place for your probation;
That world is where you'll find your compensation.
'King, when your servant sins, that accident
Becomes a chain and to the gaol he's sent—
So, if he serves well he can then expect
From you a robe of honour to collect.
Thus, accident and substance, egg and bird, 985
Produce each other—no, that's not absurd!'
The king said, 'Tell me, slave, if this is true,
How come yours failed to hatch some substance too?'
He answered, 'Wisdom has kept it concealed,
And to this transient world it's not revealed,
For, if the shapes of thoughts were manifest,
All men would worship and not face a test:
If they were not veiled, but left clear instead,
On each man's forehead they could then be read—
Who then would practise still idolatry? 990
To mock truth who'd have the audacity?

And if the Resurrection were today,
 Who in the world would sin on Judgment Day!
 The king said, 'God has veiled what bad men meet
 From common folk, but not from His elite:
 If I throw in a dungeon one emir,
 I hide this from some, but not my vizier.
 God has shown me each deed's true reckoning,
 And all the images from which deeds spring.
 Show me one sign, so I can clearly see; 995
 The clouds won't veil the glorious moon from me.'
 The slave said, 'Then, what value is my speech?
 You know already; all's within your reach.'
 The king replied, 'For this the world's been shown:
 To make completely clear what can be known;
 Until He chose His knowledge to make plain,
 God didn't place inside this world deep pain.
 You can't keep still a second here without
 A good or evil action leaping out,
 And this demand for you to act is made 1000
 So that your inner soul will be displayed.
 How can your reel-like body now keep still
 When the thread's end keeps pulling it at will?
 The sign of this pull is your restlessness,
 And idleness for you is like distress.
 Both worlds keep giving birth; each cause thus shares
 In motherhood—effects are what each bears.
 Once an effect is born, it soon will grow
 Into a cause itself and this will show—
 The generations are produced this way; 1005
 Enlightened eyes can see this clear as day!
 The king had heard enough now to decide
 Whether the slave showed signs of worth inside;
 Of course, this king had the required perception,
 But more than this I'm not allowed to mention.
 The first slave came back from the baths just then
 And the great ruler summoned him again,
 Then said, '*May you stay healthy now you're clean!*
 You're gentle and the finest slave I've seen.

I hope that all the things he said of you
Will turn out to be totally untrue! 1010
Whoever's seen your face has felt delight—
More precious than the world is that fair sight.'
He said, 'Please give me a small clue, dear king,
What that vile wretch has just been whispering.'
'He said that you're two-faced and insincere,
That you are really poison we should fear.'
On being told his friend spoke spitefully,
A sea of rage boiled in him violently;
He foamed and turned deep red at what he heard 1015
And then reviled his friend with every word:
'From when he first was my associate,
Just like a dog he was so full of shit!'
He kept on cursing due to the king's bluff,
The king then pointed to his lips: 'Enough!
The truth's now clear and cannot be denied:
His flaw is on his mouth; yours is inside.
You must sit with your vile soul far from me;
He'll supervise you—serve obediently!'

'Discern real praise from mere pretence instead, 1020
Like grass from piles of trash,' the Prophet said.
Ignore a fair face which is just a cover,
For inner ugliness will harm its lover;
And though his face be ugly, if his state
Is good within, before him fall prostrate!
The outward form must pass eventually;
The inner realm survives eternally.
How long will you adore the jug's design?
Seek water not the jug, however fine!
You saw just forms; meanings escaped your eyes— 1025
Seek the pearl in the shell, if you are wise!
These shells of bodies, though they are alive
Through the soul's ocean in which they can thrive,
Not all of them contain a pearl inside—
Look carefully with your eyes open wide!

Ask 'What does it contain?' Then choose with care,
 Because a precious pearl is very rare.
 Based on its size, a mountain is worth more
 Than the fine ruby hidden in its core;
 Your hands, your feet and hair as well in size 1030
 Are obviously much bigger than your eyes,
 But still it is quite clear to you and me
 Superior are your eyes, with which you see.

By just a single thought that's formed within,
 A hundred worlds can soon be made to spin;
 The sultan's form might be one of a kind,
 So great a thousand soldiers march behind,
 And yet this king's form follows the decree
 Of just one thought, which nobody can see.
 Due to a single thought thus thousands pass, 1035
 Just like a flood, across the earth en masse—
 That thought may seem to many very small,
 But like a flood it can control us all.
 So when you see that each skill by a thought
 Was generated in this world from naught,
 That houses, castles, towns in which we dwell
 And mountains, rivers, open fields as well,
 The earth, the sun, the ocean and the sky,
 As fish need water, on thought they rely,
 Why then out of stupidity, blind one, 1040
 Count thought an ant and body Solomon?
 The mountain seems so massive in your view,
 Thought mouse-like—just that mountain frightens you.
 This world is great and awesome in your sight;
 The clouds and thunder make you shake with fright.
 But to the world of thought you feel immune,
 Because you're heedless—you'll regret this soon!
 Since you lack wisdom and are form alone,
 You're not a human but a donkey's clone.
 You think the shadow's real and feel such joy— 1045
 But what is truly real you deem a toy.

Just wait until the day when thought should spread
Its wings, without a veil to hide its head!
Huge mountains turn to soft wool you will see,
And this vast earth become naught instantly.
You won't see sky, nor stars, nor anyone
Apart from God, the Living, Loving One.
A story, true or not, I'll now dictate;
These truths I've told it will illuminate:

*How a king's assistants grew jealous of his
favourite slave*

A king showed to one servant special grace 1050
By granting him the most exalted place:
Forty commanders couldn't earn his pay,
Nor his top-ranked viziers whom they'd obey!
Through such good fortune from his star's ascendant,
Just like Ayaz he was Mahmud's attendant.*
Before the body, his soul was created,
And it was then to the king's soul related—
Only such things which had been formed before
Should matter—don't watch new things any more!
That which the mystic owns has worth alone, 1055
Because he's focused on what was first sown:
Whether it is a wheat or barley seed,
He'll notice it, and won't fail to take heed.
This world that's night-like has created naught
But hot air—just the odd foiled trick and plot.
With tricks how can you make hearts smile and love
When you can't even see God's tricks above?
The hunter just puts snares within a snare—
Not even he can flee God's trap, beware!
Though countless plants should grow, then fade away, 1060
What God has planted is what lives today:
He sows new seeds on those He sowed before:
These seeds are transient, those for evermore;
The seeds sown first are of the perfect kind,
The second seeds are rotten, left behind.

Before the one you love discard all thought,
 Although from His thought yours have all been brought.
 What God has raised has actual worth alone:
 What grows in the end is what was first sown.
 Sow for His sake whatever seeds you sow, 1065
 Since you're His captive lover—watch them grow!
 Avoid the carnal soul and don't get caught
 In its traps! All but God's work is worth naught.
 The end of time may come, and, in that case,
 That thief will meet before the King disgrace:
 His stolen goods, his guile used for self-gain,
 From Judgment Day will on his back remain.
 A thousand brains may try to set a snare,
 One different to that one which God's placed there—
 His snares for them they'll strengthen through persistence: 1070
 To a strong wind how can straw show resistance?
 'What's the point of existence?' you now say,
 Your question must be worthwhile in some way:
 If it has no real worth, then why should I
 Listen to it and not just pass it by?
 And if your question has a point to it,
 Why think the world is of no benefit?
 Though from one point of view the world's worth naught,
 From other viewpoints it is worth a lot.
 Though your work seems to some inadequate, 1075
 Since you feel it is good keep doing it:
 The world loved Joseph's beauty, even though
 His jealous brothers felt he had to go;
 Many thought David's Psalms* were very good;
 Others judged their sound worse than banging wood;
 The Nile was purer than the Draught of Life
 And yet deniers found there blood and strife.*
 Martyrdom brings new life, believers claim;*
 Hypocrites say it's death deserving blame.
 What single blessing in the world is there 1080
 Of which one group is not denied a share?
 Can sugar benefit the cow or ass?
 Each has its own food—not all can eat grass.

If you find food bestowed not to your taste,
 You need good mentoring for such a waste!
 Or, like a sick man, one might chew the ground
 Imagining that it is food he's found,
 Ignoring his true source of nourishment
 For what brings sickness and bewilderment:
 Giving up honey, poison he will eat— 1085
 He thinks this source of sickness tastes like meat.
 For men, God's light is the original food;
 Animal food, for them, is far too crude.
 But, due to sickness, now some men assume
 That clay and water's what they should consume:
 With weak legs, a frail heart, and pallid face,
 They turn from *heaven and its paths of grace*.
 The grace of God is food for His elite;
 Without a mouth or throat such men can eat.
 The sun's food comes from the light of the Throne, 1090
 While wicked men feed from the grave alone:
 True martyrs *are still nourished**—that's their fate;
 Their food requires no mouth nor serving plate.
 The heart feeds off supportive company;
 From knowledge it acquires more purity.
 Humans are just like cups in form—few see
 The wine inside, their true reality.
 Meetings with men will nourish you; you'll grow
 From your encounters, and it soon will show:
 Planetary conjunctions, when inspected, 1095
 Reveal that both the planets are affected.
 A child is born when couples mate; it's known
 That sparks are made when iron's struck on stone;
 And after rain falls on the soil, we see
 Fruit, vegetables, and herbs grow healthily;
 When men eat vegetables this doesn't cease—
 They gain contentment, joy, and inner peace.
 When joy and pleasure fill your soul, then you
 Will gain beneficence and kindness too—
 Our bodies will gain food that's spiritual, 1100
 If we aim higher than what's sensual.

Your blushes form when blood flows to your head,
 And blood comes from the sun which burns bright red.
 Red is the best of colours: it's the one
 That comes down to us all from the Great Sun,*
 But land which joins with Saturn is instead*
 Barren, infertile land that's almost dead.
 Concurrence sparks potentiality:
 Demons control men of hypocrisy.

From the ninth heaven these truths have been brought 1105
 To much acclaim, though that was never sought—
 The pomp of people is a borrowed thing,
 But it's intrinsic to the Lord, our King.
 Men will abase themselves just for their pride,
 For pomp, and to become self-satisfied;
 In hope of glory for a single day,
 They'll struggle till their thin necks waste away.
 Why don't they come where I now stand, for here
 I bask in the Bright Sun's grace, far from fear?
 A pitch-black tower's where your sun must rise, 1110
 The Sun of Grace, though, is beyond all skies.
 He has no rising-place that's known to men:
 His essence doesn't rise and set again.
 I'm like one of His motes that's left behind,
 Sunshine without a shadow you can find.
 Revolving round this Sun is what I do
 And this is due to that Sun's splendour too.
 The Sun's aware of all the causes, but
 From Him the rope of causes has been cut.
 Good friend, I gave up hope repeatedly— 1115
 In whom? In that most generous Sun, trust me!
 But don't trust me when I say I can stand
 My exile—I feel like fish on dry land!
 If I lose hope, the deep despair you'll see
 Was once created by the Sun in me.
 Can things be cut off from their own creator?
 His Being apart, where can existents pasture?

Existents all graze on this pasture's grass,
Be they Boraq,* a stud, or lowly ass.
The blind horse grazes blindly though—that's why 1120
It is refused: the grass it passes by.
Not knowing movements all come from the Ocean,
Some change the prayer niche they face in devotion.
They drink salt water from the sweetest sea,
Which will make them turn blind immediately;
The sea then calls out, 'Come back! That's not right:
Drink using your right hand, regain your sight!'
Here 'right hand' means opinion that's correct;
Where good and bad come from it can detect.
The spear must learn its thrower has no trouble 1125
In making it now straight and now bent double.

Through love of Shams, I'm sapped of strength tonight,
Or else I would give all the blind folk sight!
Hosam, Pure Light of Truth, heal one for me
Of blindness which is caused by jealousy,
Fast-acting, healing balm for failing eyes,
Darkness-destroying cure for doubts and lies!
Rubbing the blind man's eyes with your balm clears
The darkness of a hundred thousand years.
Heal all the blind except the envious few 1130
Who jealously keep on denying you!
To those who envy you don't give new life;
Even if I should be one, send down strife!
Those jealous of the Sun and its pure light,
Resenting its existence, like the night,
Have this incurable disease, my friend,
Trapped deep inside this pit until the end:
They still demand the Sun should not remain
Though it's eternal—so they wish in vain!

The falcon is trapped among owls in the wilderness

The proper falcon will return one day; 1135
The blind one will instead soon lose her way.

One strayed into the jungle, where she found
Herself trapped by some owls who'd gathered round—
She was pure light once, the most holy kind,
But fate, that strong commander, made her blind:
It threw a lot of sand into her eye,
So she'd end up in ruins where owls fly.
But that mean stratagem was just the start:
The falcon's wings these owls soon tore apart;
The owls then shouted out, 'It's obvious 1140
To steal our home this falcon flew to us!'
They acted like a pack of dogs who block
A dervish's path and then bite his frock.
The falcon said, 'With you I don't belong;
I've turned down better places—you're so wrong!
I'm leaving now, for I don't want to stay;
I will return to my great king today.
Don't fret, you owls, for I would not stay here;
I'm going to my homeland. Is that clear?
This ruin seems so thriving to your eyes, 1145
But the king's forearm is this falcon's prize.'
'The falcon's tricking you!' an owl then said,
'To drive you from your homes—don't be misled!
Through cunning, from our grasp our homes she'll wrest,
And by pretence she'll tear us from our nest.
This fraudster acts as though she is content—
In truth, she's greedy and malevolent!
As if it's honey, she lusts after clay—
Who'd trust a bear with sheep? She acts this way.
She boasts about the king, and his hand too, 1150
Just to mislead mere simpletons like you.
Even if she should be the king and reign,
Don't listen to her if you've half a brain.
Is this bird someone that a king would meet?
Is garlic suitable for something sweet?
These words are just deceit and trickery:
"My king will rage and come and search for me."
It's unbelievable, absurd hot air!
This vain boast aims to catch us like a snare.

If you believe her, you're a stupid fool. 1155

Can such a scrawny bird know kings who rule?

If one of us should crack her skull right here,

The king's defensive forces won't appear.'

The falcon said, 'If you touch me, the king

Will then uproot your homes with one great swing!

What is an owl? If falcons bother me

Or try to make me suffer agony,

The king will climb up mountains, race for miles,

And with their skulls he'll make a hundred piles.

His grace protects me, so I have no fear; 1160

Wherever I should go, the king is near.

My image stays inside the sultan's heart—

Without it, his huge heart would split apart.

And when the king tells me to fly away

I soar to the heart's zenith like his ray:

Just like the sun and moon you'll see me fly;

I tear apart the veil across the sky.

My thought gives intellects illumination;

The sky split open due to my creation.

Even the phoenix is amazed by me— 1165

How can mere owls perceive my mystery?

For me the king thought of his gaols again

And freed a hundred thousand captive men.

He made me mix with owls for a short time—

My breath turned them to falcons; it's sublime!

Happy the owl who, in my path of flight,

Luckily of my secret catches sight!

To be exultant, cling fast to me now.

You owls will turn to falcons—don't ask how.

Whoever is in love with such a king 1170

Won't be a stranger while she's wandering;

And if the king's the cure for someone's pain,

Though she has wailed much, she won't grieve again.

I rule a realm, I'm not a worthless stray.

The king now beats the drum from far away:

The falcon drum beats out '*Return!*',* which shows

God is my witness still despite you foes.

Though I'm not like the king, since he's the best,
 Pure light from him I still can manifest.'

Essence and form don't mean we are apart: 1175
 Water unites with soil in a plant's heart;
 Wind joins with fire in substance like its food;
 Wine joins with humans and affects our mood.
 Since we're not of the King's class or His kind,
 To reach Him we must leave our selves behind.
 The Lord remains alone once He removes
 Our 'I'-ness, dust beneath His horse's hooves;
 Souls turned to dust in which His signs are found
 As hoof-prints which His horse left on the ground.
 If you become the dust beneath His feet, 1180
 Then you will be the crown of the elite.

Lest my appearance drive you far from me,
 Eat sweets before you hear my homily!
 Form has caused many men to fall astray,
 Though some chased form and reached God anyway.
 Body and soul are joined to some degree,
 Although they have no similarity:
 The eyeball fills with light which gives it sight;
 And drops of blood contain the heart's pure light;
 Kidneys house joy, the liver grief and pain; 1185
 Intellect, candle-like, lives in the brain.
 Of how they're all joined we are ignorant,
 To work out why our brain is impotent.
 With human souls the Absolute's connected—
 From Him, rare pearls each human heart collected.
 Like Mary, we're made pregnant, through that touch,
 With the Messiah we adore so much!
 Not the Messiah who walks in this place,
 But that Messiah who's beyond all space.
 The soul, once pregnant with the Holy One, 1190
 Then makes the whole world pregnant too, in turn.

Thus to a second world this world gives birth,
So resurrected souls see that world's worth.
If I discuss this till the Final Day,
There would remain a lot more left to say.
These words themselves are really just a prayer,
Which aims to catch a sweet breath He might spare.
Who can stay silent and not give his all
When '*Here I am!*'* He answers to Man's call?
This '*Here I am!*' you cannot hear, although
You can still taste it clearly, head to toe!

1195

*A thirsty man throws bricks from the top
of a wall into a stream*

There was a high wall very near a stream—
A thirsty man sat there; in pain he'd scream.
What blocked him from the water was this wall;
He'd writhe, like fish placed on dry land, and bawl.
He threw a brick into the stream one day;
To him the splash it made had much to say;
With words from the Beloved and Divine
That splashing sound soon made him drunk like wine.
He liked this splash so much he couldn't stop—
He took more of the bricks and let them drop.
The water's splashes asked him, 'Please explain:
From throwing bricks in me what do you gain?'
'I gain two benefits,' the man then said,
'So I don't want to stop until I'm dead;
Of benefits from this sound, this is first:
It sounds like a robab* to those who thirst;
And it resembles Esrafil's* deep blasts
Which raise the dead to life that truly lasts,
Or like in spring when thunder starts to roar
And gives the garden flowers men adore,
Or like when for the poor there's charity,
Or when a captive learns that he'll be free,
Or like the Merciful's breath from the Yemen
Which reached Mohammad on its way to heaven,*

1200

1205

Or like the Prophet's scent, which intercedes
 For every sinner who repents and pleads,
 And also handsome Joseph's scent, which spread
 As far as Jacob's soul from his son's head.*
 From throwing bricks my second benefit 1210
 Is that near *gushing water** I can sit.
 By taking bricks off till there's none at all,
 I will eventually remove this wall.'
 Lowering the wall leads to a higher station,
 And its removal aids annihilation.
 Prostration breaks cement effectively,
 So let's *bow down to gain proximity*!*
 But if the wall stands tall and proud instead,
 It then prevents the lowering of the head.
 On Water of Life nobody can pray 1215
 Unless they've left their bodies made of clay.
 Whoever facing this wall has more thirst
 Will manage to pull all its bricks out first;
 For water's sound whoever is more keen
 Tears more bricks off the veil to the Unseen—
 The water's sound fills this man up with wine;
 Others hear splashes, but perceive no sign.

How great to take the opportunity
 To pay one's debt while still so young and free,
 In those prime years when one can boast good health, 1220
 Strength, power, courage, and much inner wealth;
 In youth, which like a fresh, moist garden, brings,
 Without restraint, much fruit and lovely things,
 While fountains of desire and strength still flow
 To feed the body's land and make crops grow,
 When its high-roofed house is well-built and tall,
 Its pillars straight with no supports at all.
 That is, before old age binds necks with force—
 A *halter of palm fibres** its rope's source—
 When soil turns barren, weak, and crumbly too, 1225
 And plants won't grow no matter what you do;

When strength and power's waters are both drained,
And help from other people can't be gained;
When eyebrows hang down and are almost white,
And eyes grow moist with tears and failing sight;
When you look wrinkly like a lizard's back,
Your teeth hang loose, the sense of taste you lack,
The day now late, the ass lame, the road long,
The body wrecked—its functions all gone wrong,
The roots of bad traits firmly in the ground, 1230
The strength to dig them up not to be found.

*The governor tells a man: 'Dig up the thorn-bush
you have planted in the road!'*

A rough but clever-talking man one day
Planted a thorn-bush straight in people's way.
Pedestrians reproached him, they would bawl:
'Dig it up now!' He wouldn't move at all.
The more that wicked rascal's thorn-bush grew,
The more their feet were cut and bleeding too;
The clothes of passers-by would all get torn,
And paupers' feet would get pricked by a thorn.
The governor said, 'Dig it up, young man!' 1235
He said, 'Okay, I'll dig it when I can.'
'Tomorrow!' he'd repeat; it wasn't long
Before the thorn-bush grew robust and strong.
The governor said, 'Honesty you lack!
Complete this now and don't try turning back!'
He answered, '*There's still time left*, so please wait.'
The governor said, '*Debtors can't be late.*'
You who repeat 'tomorrow' need to know:
Each day that passes when you are too slow
That wicked bush grows younger with more guile, 1240
The digger, though, feels weaker all the while;
Each day the thorn-bush strengthens further still,
The digger ages, weakens, and falls ill;

The bush grows fresher each day that goes by,
 The digger gets more withered and more dry—
 While it grows younger, you keep growing old,
 So hurry, don't delay—do what you're told!
 View as a thorn-bush your bad qualities—
 They wound you frequently like a disease.
 And you've grown sick of them increasingly, 1245
 But now you've no more sensitivity.
 If you don't feel for others' sorry fates
 Because of your repulsive, selfish traits,
 Then you deserve the wounds that torture you,
 For you torment yourself and others too.
 Strike with an axe now if you are a man!
 Break Khaybar's gate like Ali if you can!*
 Or with the rose the thorns you must unite,
 And join your fire with the Beloved's light!
 Your fire is put out by light He bestows; 1250
 This union turns your thorn into a rose.
 He's the believer while you stand for hell—
 Believers can extinguish fire so well:
 The Prophet said, concerning hellfire's speech,
 That it will beg believers near its reach:
 'Pass quickly, please! Go back the way you came!
 Your light has stopped the burning of my flame.'
 The fire's death comes from the believer's light;
 Against this opposite fire cannot fight.
 Fire is light's opposite on Judgment Day: 1255
 Flames come from wrath; from grace comes each light ray.
 If you would like fire's evil now to die,
 Pour grace's water into the flame's eye—
 To be its spring is the believer's role;
 The Water of Life is the saint's pure soul;
 Your self will try to flee him—that's its aim,
 For he's of water while it is a flame.
 From water, flames will always want to flee
 As they're put out by water easily.
 Your thoughts and feelings are of fire, but those 1260
 Of Sufi shaikhs are light which God bestows.

On fire, if water from such light should pour,
 The flames will leap up high and start to roar.
 'Die now, in pain!' this fire must now be told,
 So that the hellfire of your self turns cold;
 Then your rose-garden won't be burnt like wood,
 Nor your just nature and will to do good.
 The seeds which you sow after that will yield
 Herbs, tulips, and wild roses in your field.
 I have digressed again with what I say. 1265
 Return now! But where is the proper way?
 You jealous man, we wished just to make clear
 Your ass is lame and home is far from here.
 Hurry! The sowing season will soon end
 With nothing left but sin and shame, my friend.
 The worm bored through roots of your body's tree—
 Uproot it and then burn it totally!
 Traveller, beware, now that the day is late!
 Life's sun has set within the well of fate.
 Hurry while strength remains and you still can 1270
 Act chivalrously like a strong young man!
 Gamble away the seeds you have left, so
 In moments a new plant might start to grow!
 While this jewelled lamp burns on, you must be quick—
 Pour more oil into it and trim its wick!
 Don't say 'tomorrow'—life is short. Take heed,
 Don't let days pass till sowing a good deed.
 The body is an obstacle for you—
 Out with the old, if you yearn for the new!
 Close your lips. Open now your palm of gold. 1275
 Don't be so mean. Be generous and bold.
 Chivalry means abandoning all lust,
 Which will prevent you rising from the dust.
 Chivalry's from the tree of paradise;*
 He who lets go must pay a heavy price.
 Abandoning lust—that is *the firmest rope*;*
 This rope will draw your soul above—have hope!
 Act well, so chivalry will thus begin
 To take you up, back to your origin.

You're handsome Joseph, this world is your well;* 1280
 The rope is trust in God's will—can't you tell?
 Joseph, the rope has come now, so cling fast.
 Don't miss it, for the time has almost passed.
 Thank God this rope was lowered down to you,
 And grace and mercy have mixed with it too,
 So you might see the world with a new soul,
 One manifest but still invisible.
 This non-existent world looks real to you,
 Only because the real world you can't view.

The dust is carried by the wind, to play 1285
 Illusion tricks and make veils in this way—
 That dust in motion is the husk, of course,
 The Hidden One its kernel and its source.
 In the Lord's hands the dust is like a tool,
 While wind is lofty, noble, fit to rule;
 Mere human eyes see dust alone in front—
 The eyes which see the wind are different.
 Each horse knows other horses of its kind;
 Each rider knows what's on a rider's mind.
 Your eye's the horse, the rider is God's light— 1290
 Riderless horses are a sorry sight,
 So train the horse in the way of perfection
 Or else it will deserve the King's rejection.
 By the King's eyes the horse's eyes are led;
 Without His eyes its eyes are filled with dread.
 Unless you lead your horse towards some hay,
 It neighs 'No!' and refuses to obey.
 Thus God's light must mount sensual light, before
 The soul can yearn to go to God once more:
 Riderless horses cannot find the way; 1295
 A king who knows the path they must obey.
 Follow your senses when His light's their rider—
 His light controls them then like an insider.
 God's light makes earth's light beautiful and bright—
 This is what's meant by *Light on top of light*:*

Earth's light will pull you to the world you see;
God's light takes you beyond miraculously.
Perceptibles are from a lower sphere:
God's light's the sea, the senses one small tear—
But you won't see that rider, other than 1300
Through worthy deeds and righteous speech, good man.

Even mere sensual light is kept from you
Inside your pupils, where you cannot view.
How will you see that holy man's pure light
When you can't see the earth's with your poor sight?
That sensual light is hidden from your eyes;
More hidden is that light beyond the skies.
Like straw which by a heavy wind is blown,
This world is helpless next to the Unknown:
It spins it high, then brings it back down low, 1305
Repairs it now, then breaks it like a foe;
Sometimes to left, sometimes to right it's borne;
It makes a rose-garden, then makes a thorn.
The hand is hidden but the pen can write:
The horse trots, though the rider's out of sight;
The arrow flies; the bow remains unseen—
The Soul of Souls no human's ever seen.
Don't break the arrow—from a king it came,
From one aware; it has a certain aim.
God said, '*When you threw then you did not throw*,'* 1310
God's acts have precedence, as life will show.
Don't break the arrow but your rage—it's blind,
If it thinks milk and blood one of a kind;
So kiss the arrow, which you ought to bring
Moist with your bloodstains to the Glorious King.
What can be seen is feeble, helpless, chained,
While what's unseen is fierce and unrestrained.
We are the prey—to whom belongs the snare?
We're polo balls—who is the batting player?
He tears and then He sews, but where is He? 1315
He blows and burns like fire, but we can't see.

Now He may make a saint an infidel,
 Then turn an atheist to a monk as well.
 The seeker is in danger of the snare
 Until he's purged of self, clear as the air;
 And on this path fierce brigands lie in wait—
 You'll need God's help to flee from a grim fate.
 Not a pure mirror yet, the aspirant
 Has not caught the prized bird at the king's hunt;
 Once he completes the path, then he'll be free, 1320
 Safe in a station of security.
 No mirror turns to iron in retreat;
 No bread returns to being stacks of wheat;
 Ripe grapes don't turn to the disliked sour type—
 Once grapes are ripe, they don't become unripe!
 When ripe, far from the realm of change, take flight!
 Like Borhan-e Mohaqeq* turn to light!
 Escape yourself and you'll be proof today;
 A slave becomes a sultan in this way.
 For those who wanted to perceive it here, 1325
 Salah* would open eyes and lead them near;
 Every eye blessed with God's own light could see
 In this man's face deep mystic poverty.
 Like God, the shaikh will teach without a tool;
 Without words his disciples he will school.
 Like soft wax in his hands the heart's the same;
 Sometimes his seal brings fame, and sometimes shame.
 His seal brings up a seal-ring in my mind;
 Of what then does the bezel's form remind?
 The goldsmith's image this sends to my brain, 1330
 Like one more part of a connected chain.
 Whose voice has filled the mountain of the heart,
 Which wasn't full but silent at the start?
 He is the sage, wherever he may be—
 May his voice fill my heart perpetually!
 One mountain *doubles voices*, and I'm told
 Another echoes them a hundredfold.
 The mountain gushes at that voice's sound
 A hundred thousand pure springs from the ground;

When grace pours from the mountain like a flood, 1335
 The mountain's water will turn into blood:
 For Moses's sake Sinai changed this way,
 With rubies covering it straight away.*
 Wisdom and life mere stone came to possess—
 My people, are we humans then worth less?
 From our souls no such springs have yet been seen,
 Nor are we, like the angels, dressed in green.*
 I still have not heard longing's passionate roar,
 Nor seen a Saqi with pure wine to pour.
 Where are the longing men who with an axe 1340
 Can cut through mountains like the softest wax?
 Perhaps the moon some beams might radiate
 Which through the mountain might just penetrate?
 Each mountain is uprooted from its place
 At Resurrection—who can stop this grace?
 This inner resurrection is supreme—
 That one's a wound, this one a soothing cream;*
 Whoever's seen this salve will feel no pain:
 Those who see goodness good traits too will gain.
 The ugly one near beauty feels so blest, 1345
 But beauty fades if it is Autumn's guest;
 When bread becomes life's close associate,
 It gives new life to those who feed on it;
 When wood joins fire and then is set alight,
 The darkness disappears and all is bright;
 When a dead donkey falls in a salt-mine,*
 It gains new life, no longer asinine.
*The colour of God** is His dyeing vat:
 All things become one-coloured mixed in that.
 If you tell one who's fallen in, 'Arise!' 1350
 'Don't blame me, I'm the vat itself!' he cries,
 Just like that saint who '*I'm the Truth*' once said*—
 He still was iron, but he burned bright red:
 The iron's colour is effaced by flames;
 It's silent while the fieriness makes claims—
 In colour when it is the same as gold,
 Without a tongue it shouts, 'I'm fire, behold!'

The fire's effect leaves iron glorified:
 'I'm fire, I'm fire!' it now repeats with pride.

I am fire too; if you have any doubt, 1355
 Test me by touching me—you'll soon find out!
 I am fire too; does this claim seem untrue?
 Bring your face close to mine and I'll show you!
 When Man receives God's light, the angels fall
 To bow to him, God's chosen over all,
 As do those who like angels have forced out
 From their souls all rebelliousness and doubt.
 What fire? What iron? Shut your mouth now please!
 Don't show off with your clever similes!
 Don't dirty now the water with commotion, 1360
 Silence your tongue as you approach the ocean!
 It can engulf a hundred men like me,
 But I can't keep away from this vast sea!
 For it, my mind and soul I'd sacrifice!
 This mystic sea has paid my soul's blood-price.
 I'll swim in it until my legs feel dead,
 And then, like ducks, I'll float on it instead!
 Those present, though they may be unrefined,
 Are better off than those who've stayed behind.
 Polluted body, go now to the pool! 1365
 You can't be washed outside it, stupid fool!
 Even a clean man who should stay away,
 From cleanliness is bound quite soon to stray.
 The purity of men's hearts is eternal,
 The purity of bodies just external,
 Because the heart's a pool which secretly
 Possesses its own path towards the sea.
 Your finite purity needs something more;
 Expenditure reduces what you store.
 The water told a dirty man, 'Come here!' 1370
 He said, 'I'm too ashamed to stand so near!'
 The water said, 'How will shame leave you then?
 How will you ever be made clean again?'

Such men who hide from water prove it's true
 That '*shame prevents faith*'—don't let this stop you!
 The heart is muddied by the body's pond;
 The body's cleaned by the heart's pool beyond.
 My son, come to the heart's pool, and beware
 Of steps towards the body's pond down there!
 Body and heart's seas clash, their waves are tossed, 1375
 But still *a barrier's there which can't be crossed*.
 Whether you're straight or crooked, move ahead,
 Try to run forward, don't crawl back instead!
 Though there is danger near the king, don't fear.
 Those with high aims can't bear not to be near.
 The king is sweeter than sweet sugar, so
 Towards his sweetness souls should want to go.
 Fault-finder, stick to safety if you must;
 If you seek peace you're weak and lack full trust.
 My soul's a furnace, happy when it's lit; 1380
 To be the fire's home is enough for it.
 In love there is such burning—you are not
 A furnace if you can't feel love that hot!
 When yours is dervish poverty's pure breath,
 You've gained eternal life and have fled death;
 When anguish just increases joy in you,
 Your soul blooms roses and pure lilies too—
 What others dread is your security:
 The duck, unlike the sparrow, loves the sea.

Physician, once more I have turned insane! 1385
 Beloved, I am frenzied once again!
 How multiform are your chain's rings which bind—
 Each one gives madness of a different kind.
 Each ring's gift is unlike the rest: in me
 Each breath I feel a new insanity!
 This proves the proverb '*madness is diverse*',
 Especially from this prince who's glorious.
 My madness crosses furthest boundaries;
 Now madmen come to give advice to me!

*How friends came to the madhouse for
Zo'l-Nun al-Mesri**

It happened thus to Zo'l-Nun al-Mesri: 1390
 Inside him was such wild insanity.
 This frenzy started to intensify;
 It reached beyond all hearts, above the sky.
 Mere earthbound men, don't try now to compare
 Your frenzy with that of the pure, beware!
 His madness no men could endure to see;
 His fire burned their beards of pomposity.
 When flames burned these men's beards, they gathered round
 To take him to the gaol, where he was bound.
 There's no way one can pull back love's long rein, 1395
 Though for the path the vulgar show disdain;
 Mystics fear vulgar men for they are blind,
 And so these lofty kings are hard to find.
 When scoundrels rule, the likes of great Zo'l-Nun
 Will be led to the prison very soon.
 The great king rides alone across the lands—
 Can this rare pearl be kept in children's hands?
 This pearl's an ocean in a drop, my friend,
 A sun inside an atom, comprehend!
 A sun appeared as a mere atom once, 1400
 Perceived just by men with intelligence;
 All atoms were effaced in it, and then
 The world got drunk and sobered up again.
 When judgment is by traitors, then for sure
 You'll see hang on the gibbet poor Mansur;*
 When those in power lack intelligence
 'They kill the prophets'* is the consequence;
 Through folly, to the prophets those astray
 Complained: 'We think you're bad luck*—go away!'
 Ignorant Christians seek security 1405
 Still from that lord who was hung cruelly—
 That he was crucified by Jews they say,
 So how can he protect them all today?

Pure Jesus's heart bled for them, so how
 Can '*while you're with them*'* help the Christians now?
 The danger to the goldsmith and pure gold
 From counterfeiting cheats is twentyfold:
 Josephs hide from the people's jealousies—
 They'll jump in fires to dodge their enemies;
 Josephs are in the well due to deceit— 1410
 His brothers left him for the wolves to eat;
 How Joseph suffered from such jealous lies!
 Envy is like a huge wolf in disguise.
 For Joseph, Jacob always used to fear,
 Especially when he knew wolves were near—
 The outward wolf did not harm his fine son;
 The wolf of jealousy surpassed that one:
 This wolf attacked instead in that wolf's place,
 With the excuse: '*We had gone out to race.*'*
 A thousand wolves don't know such trickery; 1415
 This wolf will be disgraced eventually:
 Without a doubt the envious will transform
 On Judgment Day into a vile wolf's form.
 All greedy, mean, and carrion-eating men
 Will be forced to take on a pig's form then.
 The fornicators' genitals will stink,
 As will the mouths of all who love to drink.
 Filth which before was sensed by just a few
 On Judgment Day will be so clear to view.
 Man's being is a jungle, so defend 1420
 Against it if you're from beyond, my friend!
 Thousands of wolves and swine exist within,
 Good traits and vile ones, pious deeds and sin—
 Whichever one is stronger will take hold:
 More gold than copper makes the compound gold.
 Behaviour which you now choose as your norm—
 At Resurrection you'll adopt that form:
 A wolf may enter in a human's head
 Or radiant Joseph might come in instead.
 From breast to breast pass gentleness and spite 1425
 Through a route which is hidden from your sight.

And from a human to a cow and ass
 Virtue and worthy knowledge too can pass:
 The wild horse can be trained in how to walk,
 A bear to play, a billy-goat to talk;
 For dogs to learn to lead is not that hard:
 They can be taught to herd sheep, hunt, and guard.
 The Seven Sleepers' dog* gained their pure light,
 A seeker it became in its own right.
 Each moment in the breast new species rise, 1430
 Demons and angels, beasts in every guise.
 From that great jungle lions know of best
 There is a way towards the hidden breast,
 So steal a pearl the mystics keep within,
 You who are less than a mere dog, dive in!
 If you steal pearls, make sure to snatch the best;
 If you bear loads, then pick the loveliest.

*The disciples understand that Zo'l-Nun has not gone mad,
 but has acted that way deliberately*

Zo'l-Nun's friends came to see him at his cell,
 Sceptical of reports he was unwell:
 'Perhaps this is deliberate from the sage, 1435
 For he's God's sign, the *qebla** of the age?
 Far be it from his wisdom like the sea
 That madness should make him act stupidly!
 And God forbid this moon, whose rank's so high,
 Should be veiled by the clouds now in the sky!
 He's chosen to hide from the public there;
 The loathsome intellectuals he can't bear:
 The shallow intellect's vile infamy
 Has led him to go mad deliberately:
 "Whip me with a cow's tail now!" he has said. 1440
 "Don't question me! Come, strike my back and head,
 So I'll gain life, like that corpse long ago
 Whipped hard with Moses's cow's tail* —each blow
 That I receive will leave me feeling thrilled
 Like that man who in this way had been killed."

That man came back to life miraculously,
As copper turned to gold through alchemy.
That murdered man sprang up and pointed out
His gang of killers, so there was no doubt:
'This group killed me,' he then said publicly, 1445
'And now they're stirring trouble up for me.'
When this material body should fall dead
A new existence comes alive instead,
Both paradise and hell this spirit sees;
It knows so clearly all the mysteries;
Who its own killers were it will declare,
And then display deceit and falsehood's snare.
This path requires the cow's death, so the soul
Might be revived by its tail—that's the goal.
So kill the cow, your carnal soul! Don't mourn! 1450
This way your hidden spirit will be born.

Resumption of the story of Zo'l-Nun

When those friends came to see him in the gaol,
'Hey! Who are you? Beware!' they heard him wail.
They said politely, 'We've come from afar;
We're friends who want to find out how you are.
How are you, sea of wisdom? Please explain
The lies that madness has destroyed your brain.
Can smoke rise from the furnace to the sun?
A phoenix by a crow can't be undone!
Don't hide the truth from us; explain it please! 1455
We are your lovers and true devotees!
One shouldn't drive away well-meaning lovers,
Nor dupe them, hiding underneath the covers.
Divulge your secret clearly, lord of grace!
Bright moon, don't hide behind the clouds your face!
We're lovers with pained hearts, sincere and true;
In both worlds we have fixed our hearts on you.'
He started first to utter foul abuse,
Then gibberish as though his tongue was loose;

Next he threw sticks and stones, and they would duck 1460
 And run away, afraid they might be struck.
 Zo'l-Nun then laughed aloud and shook his head,
 'Look at the hot air of false friends!' he said.
 'What friends! Where is the sign that they're sincere?
 To proper friends such pain is something dear.
 How can you flee a friend's pain when he yells?
 Pains are the kernels held in friendship's shells:
 Isn't the sign of friendship happiness
 Though you experience pain and deep distress?
 A friend is gold while pain is fire—we know 1465
 True gold feels joy inside the flame's red glow.'

How Loqman's master tested Loqman's wisdom

Loqman,* a pure slave, showed this memorably:
 He would serve day and night efficiently,
 And was the best slave in his master's view,
 Who valued him more than his children too,
 For though Loqman was a low slave by birth,
 He'd mastered lust, and thus increased his worth.
 A king once told a shaikh, 'Hey there, good man!
 Ask me to grant you something while you can!
 He said, 'Don't you feel shame, your majesty, 1470
 To talk in such a vulgar way to me?
 I have two slaves, both vile and wretched too,
 But these two worthless slaves rule over you!
 The king asked, 'What are they? Don't be unjust!
 He said, 'The first is rage, the second lust.'
 For kingship, real kings do not have concern,
 Since their light shines without need for the sun;
 Treasure belongs to those with gold as essence;
 The foe of false existence boasts Existence.*
 Loqman's own master was so outwardly, 1475
 But he was Loqman's slave still inwardly—
 In this world such things are not a surprise:
 A pearl is less than straw in some men's eyes;

The desert '*place of safety*' some have called—

By its false looks their brains have been enthralled;

For some, clothes tell of people's worthiness—

They call men vulgar for the way they dress;

Some fall for false asceticism's show,

Though light's required its actual worth to know.

Light free from imitation's harm one needs

1480

To know a man before his actual deeds,

To enter his heart through the intellect,

Free from all gossip, his worth to detect.

Knowers of the Unseen, God's own elite,

Are *spies of hearts* whom you can never cheat.

Such men, like thoughts, can enter into you;

Your secrets are unveiled for them to view.

What does the sparrow have that she should be

Veiled from the falcon's intellect—tell me!

The secrets of God's essence are revealed

1485

To them—how can men's secrets stay concealed?

These men can travel quickly through the sky—

Walking on land's not hard when you can fly.

Iron became like wax in David's hand;*

What will become of wax? Please understand!

Loqman was just in form a slave, no more;

Slavery was simply like a badge he wore.

Some masters when they travel somewhere new

Dress slaves in their own clothes, and they change too

Into their slaves' clothes, so men are misled

1490

Into believing that a slave's the head.

The master walks behind as good slaves do,

So no one looking on will have a clue.

'The seat of honour is what you must use!'

He tells the slave, 'I'll follow with your shoes.

Be harsh and curse me, so none will suspect.

Towards me from now on don't show respect.

Your duty now is to stop serving me,

For here I've sown the seed of trickery.'

Like slaves such masters willingly would act, 1495
 So it's believed that they are slaves in fact.
 With being powerful masters they've been sated;
 They do such work to be annihilated.
 Slaves of desire though are a different kind,
 Although they claim they rule their soul and mind.
 From masters come the paths to true effacement,
 From lust's slaves naught but slavery's abasement.
 Compared with this world that world that's unseen
 Is topsy-turvy — you've seen what I mean!
 His master understood this situation, 1500
 For he'd seen tokens of Loqman's true station.
 He learned the secret and felt satisfied;
 To do his own path's duties he then tried.
 He would have set him free immediately;
 To please Loqman was his priority.
 Loqman desired that nobody discover
 That he was God's brave devotee and lover.
 To hide your secrets from foes isn't strange,
 Hiding them from yourself, though, makes a change—
 Hide from your own eyes struggles you endure, 1505
 So from the evil eye you'll stay secure;
 Surrender now to His reward's great snare,
 Then from yourself steal something, unaware!
 To wounded men some opium first they give,
 And then take out the blade so they might live.
 One man was torn with pain the hour he died;
 His soul left while he was preoccupied:
 Whatever thoughts you give your heart up to,
 That moment something will be snatched from you,
 So occupy yourself with what is best 1510
 And then they'll take from you what's ugliest!
 Dear prudent one, whatever you achieve,
 Once you feel safe the thief with it will leave.
 A trader's goods fall in the stream, so he
 Grabs hold of the best goods immediately—
 Since in the water something will be lost
 It's best to save what has a higher cost.

*The excellence and wisdom of Loqman become manifest
to those who wish to test him*

The food for Loqman's* master that they gave
He would immediately send to his slave,
So that Loqman could taste it first of all, 1515
He'd then eat what was left, however small.
The master ate what he'd left and felt bliss,
But threw out what his servant chose to miss,
And, if he ate some, it was not through lust—
Their special bond was an eternal trust.
They brought a melon as a gift. He said,
‘Please call Loqman, my son, to eat instead!’
He passed a melon slice for him to eat;
Loqman ate it as though it tasted sweet.
He gave more to him due to what he'd seen 1520
Of relish in him—he ate seventeen!
With one slice left, the king said, ‘That’s for me!’
How sweet this melon is I now shall see.
Loqman ate them with obvious delight—
Everyone here now longs to have a bite!’
Its bitterness burned up his throat: his tongue
Was blistered by it; pain filled up each lung!
The king was stunned and lost his wits awhile,
Then said, ‘My soul and life, this tastes so vile!’
How could you eat such poison and not mind? 1525
How could you think the host was being kind?
What tolerance and patience I did see!
Perhaps you feel your life’s your enemy?
Why didn’t you just leave the poisoned food
And say, “Excuse me, please, if this seems rude?”’
Loqman said, ‘I’ve now eaten from your hand
So much that I feel shame. Please understand:
Refusing one thing bitter from you, I
Thought shameful, kind sage whom I won’t defy.
I owe all to your generosity, 1530
Drowned in your snare and bait as in the sea.

If I complain about one bitter thing,
 Throw dirt on me and make me feel shame's sting!
 Delight in your hand which bestows sweet sugar
 Became that melon's bitter taste's remover.'

Through love the bitter turns sweet, as we've told;
 Through love all copper too becomes pure gold;
 Through love the goblet's dregs turn clear and pure;
 Through love the pain we feel becomes our cure;
 Through love some even can revive the dead; 1535
 Through love the king becomes a slave instead.
 This love results from knowledge—so how can
 The throne be taken by a stupid man?
 To love, deficient knowledge can't give birth,
 But only to what's lifeless and lacks worth;
 By what looks pretty it is easily stirred,
 As though the true beloved's voice is heard—
 Deficient knowledge can't discriminate:
 The lightning with the sun it would equate.
 The Prophet called deficient men 'cursed' once; 1540
 He meant deficient in intelligence;
 The physically deficient gain God's grace,
 Therefore to curse such men is a disgrace.
 Much worse than that is weakness in the mind—
 That merits cursing, being left behind.
 Perfecting wisdom is achievable;
 Perfecting bodies is impossible.
 Each unbeliever's infidelity
 Was due to a weak mind's deficiency;
 Physical weaknesses are not the same: 1545
 God sent relief: '*For blind men there's no blame.*'*
 Lightning is transient, unreliable;
 You can't tell what lasts from what's temporal.
 The lightning laughs—to ask 'At whom?' one might:
 It laughs at those devoted to its light.
 Such light is flawed, unlike light which is best,
 That which is far beyond the East and West:

Lightning we know will *take away men's sight*,*
 Eternal light though helps men in their plight.
 To ride on foam from waves next to the sea, 1550
 Or read in lightning flashes patchily,
 Is failure, for you'll fail to see the end;
 It is to mock your heart and mind, my friend.
 The intellect should know what's finally planned;
 It is the self that cannot understand.
 Intellect turns to self when devastated
 By self, as if by Saturn it's check-mated.*
 Even misfortune you should contemplate—
 Gaze on the one who brought you such a fate.
 If you reflect on the tide's ebb and flow, 1555
 You'll see how good luck often follows woe.
 To different states He keeps on moving you,
 In this way opposites to bring to view:
 Your deep dread of *the left side* will display
*Hope for the right side** on the Final Day;
 In this way, you'll have two wings—who'd deny
 That with one wing alone no bird can fly?

Either let me keep quiet, or instead
 Command me to complete what I have said!
 If You want neither it is up to You; 1560
 About what You intend we have no clue!
 Abraham's soul one needs, to gain the light
 Which can, through flames, bring heaven to one's sight,
 And to climb rung by rung up to the sun,
 And not be stuck in this dominion.
 Traverse the seventh heaven like God's Friend;*
 Say: '*I don't love the ones that set*'* —ascend!
 This carnal world we live in leads astray
 All men except those who resist lust's sway.

*Conclusion of the story about the jealousy of the king's
entourage for the special slave*

The tale about the king's slave whom some eyes 1565
 In court watched jealously, since he was wise,
 Was left unfinished due to my digression—
 We must return to it for one last session.
 The kingdom's blessed gardener can see
 The differences between each single tree:
 The tree that will be bitter to the core
 And that tree which is worth a hundred more
 He won't judge equals when each one first grows,
 Since each one's outcome he already knows,
 That different fruit they'll bear eventually, 1570
 Though now they're similar superficially.
 The shaikh who *sees by God's Light** is aware
 Of both the start and ending of this pair—
 He shuts his eyes to this world for the Friend,
 Preferring that eye which perceives the end.
 Those jealous men were like bad trees, which are
 Bitter and ruled by an unlucky star.
 They boiled and their mouths foamed in jealousy.
 In secret they made a conspiracy,
 For they wished to behead that slave and tear 1575
 His roots up from this world just like his hair.
 His soul's the king's soul too—how could he die?
 The Lord protects his roots from those who'd try.
 The king learnt of their thoughts and secret plot,
 But, like Bu Bakr Robabi,* he said naught.
 He viewed the hearts of those who schemed with lies,
 But simply would applaud before their eyes:
 Some devious people tricky traps prepare
 To make a king get caught inside their snare—
 A mighty king who's limitless in grace 1580
 Can't be ensnared, you asses! Know your place!
 To trap this king they knitted still a net;
 From him they'd learned this skill—such fools forget:

The pupil who begins a rivalry
With his own master wretched luck will see.
With which one? With the whole world's master, who
Both clear and hidden realms can easily view;
He sees *by God's light** all things clear as day;
He's torn the veils of ignorance away.
The pupil's heart has holes like rugs that age, 1585
And yet he puts a veil before that sage—
His own veil laughs at him and what he's done;
Its mouth's a window for that glorious one.
The master tells the pupil angrily:
'Than dogs you seem to have less loyalty!
You don't think I'm a master of that kind
Whose rule is strong—you think, like you, I'm blind.
Haven't I nurtured both your brain and heart?
Water won't reach you, if you choose to part.
My heart's the workshop for your fortune, son— 1590
Would you destroy this workshop, wretched one?'
You boast you'll lead him to your fire to burn,
But, through the window to your heart, he'll learn,
For through this window he can read your mind—
Your heart reveals all to men of this kind.
Suppose he simply smiles and won't react,
Because he's generous and knows how to act;
It's not your flattery that makes him smile,
But due to your thoughts he reads all the while—
With falsehood thus his falsehood you have won: 1595
Deal a small blow, be dealt a massive one!
If he'd smiled in approval, judged you true,
A thousand flowers would have bloomed in you,
For when his heart approves things, then the sun
Will enter Aries and lift everyone—
This makes the spring smile and the weather fine;
Blossoms and meadows at this time combine,
A thousand doves and nightingales cry out
The songs this world has had to do without.
Your spirit yellows like the leaves with age, 1600
So how can you not sense the ruler's rage?

The king's sun in reproach's zodiac,
 Like print in books, with shame makes faces black:
 Mercury's pen* on our souls' leaves will write;
 Each page is balanced thus with black and white,
 But he'll write orders soon in green and red,
 So that our souls flee weakness, fear and dread—
 Green and red are spring's abrogating power;
 They're like the rainbow, lovely as a flower.

*How reverence for Solomon's message was reflected in the
 heart of Belqis, the Queen of Sheba,* by means of the
 wretched form of the hoopoe*

May Belqis, Queen of Sheba, now be blest! 1605
 A thousand intellects this queen possessed!
 From Solomon a hoopoe brought a message,
 A sealed note with inside it a key passage;
 She read those pithy words which were so wise,
 Chose then the messenger not to despise:
 She'd seen a hoopoe form with phoenix soul,
 Her eyes saw foam, her heart seas as a whole.
 The intellect for this cause fights our senses;
 The Prophet fought his foes for such offences:
 They judged him just a human far too soon, 1610
 Not having seen the Prophet *split the moon*.^{*}
 Throw dust now on your outward eye's false vision,
 The foe of intellect and true religion!
 God called the outward eye blind, mean, and low,
 A worshipper of idols and our foe;
 It sees the foam but not the waves behind,
 Today but not tomorrow—thus it's blind.
 Although Time's Master is in front of it,
 It cannot see His treasure, not one bit!
 One word from that Sun if an atom gave, 1615
 Our sun would long to be that atom's slave;
 One drop sent from the Sea of Unity
 Bewitched our seven seas eternally;

A handful of mere earth, at His dictate,
 Was sent to make the heavens fall prostrate;
 Adam was made God's deputy; then came
 The angels bowing to his earthly frame.
*The heavens were all torn apart** —but why?
 An earthling opened up a mystic eye.
 Like wine dregs, clay in water will descend, 1620
 So how can clay beyond God's throne ascend?
 It won't receive from water such a lift,
 But from the Bounteous Source it gains this gift.
 He can make air and fire sink to the ground
 And thorns surpass the finest roses found—
 We know that *God does what He wills*;* He reigns;
 He can form cures out of the source of pains!
 If air and fire He should one day throw down,
 And turn to dregs, which are thick and dark brown,
 Then raise up earth and water very high, 1625
 And make the path above one men can try,
 'You raise up whom You will'* will be made clear.
 He told an earthling, 'With wings fly up here!
 And He told fire, 'Turn into Satan! Go,
 Deceive men in the basest realm below!
 So, earthly man, transcend the stars. Soar high!
 Make fiery Satan in the dirt now lie!
 'I'm not like the four natures and first cause;*'
 I'm constant and control without a pause.
 Without a reason, My deeds are correct; 1630
 They're predetermined—use your intellect!
 I'm free to change, whenever, what I do,
 And, when I choose, I'll put to shame some too!
 "Become filled up with fire!" I tell the sea,
 To fire "Turn to a rosebush!" I decree,
 I tell the mountain, "Be as soft as wool!"
 I tell the sky, "Come down! It's possible!"
 And I command the sun, "Join with the moon!"
 Then I'll change them to black clouds very soon.
 I make the sun's fount turn as dry as flour 1635
 And change blood into musk through My great power.'

The sun and moon like two black clouds—no joke!
 God next will place upon their necks a yoke.

*A philosopher rejects the Qur'anic verse
 'If your water should have seeped into
 the ground . . . '**

A man read from the Holy Book one day:
*'If water seeps in soil * I've blocked its way:*
 The water in the soil's depths I will hide
 And make the spring like deserts I have dried—
 Who can bring water to the fount but Me?
 I have no peer in grace and majesty.'
 Then a philosopher with education 1640
 Passed by in earshot of this recitation,
 And when he heard this man recite, he said:
 'We are the ones who dig it up instead!
 With spades and axes, wells by men are found,
 Who raise the water up then from the ground.'
 That night he dreamt a lion-like man came
 And punched him—blinding him was this man's aim—
 Then said, 'From these light-fount eyes guiding you
 Dig up some light if what you say is true!' 1645
 He jumped up to confirm what he had feared—
 His eyes were blind; their light had disappeared!
 If only he had begged then for forgiveness,
 That light would have returned, for God is generous;
 Seeking forgiveness isn't in our hands:
 Not every drunk sips this, nor understands.
 His actions and denial blocked the way
 From his heart to repentance straight away;
 His heart became then just as hard as stone—
 In stone, repentance's seed can't be sown.

Where can Sho'ayb* and his true prayer be found 1650
 To turn a mountain now to fertile ground?

Abraham's firm faith made him capable
Of following what seemed impossible;
A Copt once begged the Prophet for his aid—
Stony ground into fertile land he made.
In contrast, though, an infidel's rejection
Turned gold to copper, peace to war's dejection—
It caused an ugly change thus on its own,
Turned cultivable land to barren stone.
Not every heart's allowed to fall prostrate; 1655
Grace won't reach all who eagerly await.
Beware then, don't do things that are depraved,
Thinking, 'I will repent and thus be saved'!
Water and heat are needed for contrition;
Thick clouds and lightning are a precondition:
To ripen, fruit needs water and much light;
With clouds and lightning they will turn out right.
Without tears and bright lightning in your heart,
How shall you put out anger's flames which dart?
How shall the meadow of His union grow? 1660
How shall pure fountain springs be made to flow?
How shall a flowerbed tell grass what it feels?
Or violets with jasmine trees make deals?
Or plane trees open up their palms to pray?
Or other trees, like drunkards, lean and sway?
And how shall blossom shake off from its sleeve
Its wealth, unless it does so by God's leave?
How shall a blood-red tulip shine so bright?
A rose take gold from its purse that's sealed tight?
And how shall nightingales smell roses too? 1665
Or doves, like men who search, cry out 'Koo koo!'
How shall the stork call 'Lak lak!' friend of mine?
What does that mean? 'The Kingdom, God, is Thine.'*
The secrets in its mind how shall earth show?
Without the sky how shall the orchard grow?
From where were all these marvellous garments sent?
From the Most Noble and Beneficent.
All of those marvels witness special men
Who've soared to Him and then returned again.

They've seen the King, Whose signs delight them too, 1670
 While those who've never seen Him have no clue.
 The mystic's spirit at *Alast** could see
 His Lord, and so it felt drunk instantly!
 He has drunk wine, so he detects its smell;
 If he had not, would he know how to tell?
 Wisdom's our camel, though it be a stray,*
 And, like a guide, to kings it shows the way.
 You dream of someone with a lovely face
 Who gives this promise of a sign of grace:
 'Once you see this sign, your wish will come true: 1675
 A man tomorrow will come up to you;
 He will be riding at a steady pace,
 Then, once he reaches you, you'll both embrace.
 Another sign is that this man will smile
 When near you, with his arms crossed all the while.
 On the next day you must not share the news
 With anyone, or all I've told you'll lose.'
 God ordered Zechariah: 'For three days
 You mustn't speak—this is a crucial phase!
 Keep silent for three days and nights, and then 1680
 John will be born, a star among the men.
 Don't breathe a word in these days to a soul,
 For silence is required to reach the goal—
 Don't speak at all about this sign, beware!
 Retain it in your heart and hide it there!'*
 You'll then be told of other signs in store—
 They're nothing though, as he has hundreds more:
 'These are the signs designed to let you know
 That rank and power you crave God will bestow:
 You will soon weep all night with sleeplessness, 1685
 And then at dawn you'll burn with neediness.
 Your day will have turned dark without Him here;
 So thin your neck will then start to appear.
 You will have given what you own away,
 Like those who gamble all just to obey.
 You'll have forsaken both your health and sleep;
 Thin like a hair, your head too you won't keep.

For long, like incense, in flames you'll have stayed,
And, like a helmet, bowed before the blade!
A million acts of helplessness and need
Belong to those whose hearts forever bleed.

1690

The morning after having had this dream,
Through hope, triumphant your next day will seem.
You'll keep on looking to your left and right,
Thinking: 'Where is that token from last night?'
You'll tremble like a leaf and say 'Alas,
If I don't find it and this day should pass!'
You'll search each nook and cranny, everywhere,
Like one who's lost a calf and feels despair.
Men will ask you, 'Why run thus to and fro?
Who is it that you've lost? How long ago?'
You'll answer, 'All is well, but nobody
Will hear about the brilliant news from me;
If I tell you, my sign will pass me by—
If that should vanish, then I'd rather die!'
You'll look in every rider's face, and they
Will shout, 'Don't stare, you mad fool! Look away!'
You'll say, 'I've lost a friend, distinguished men,
And now I aim to find that man again.
May your most noble fortune last forever!
Please pardon now and pity this poor lover!'
When you search hard it's not of no avail—
Tradition says: 'Endeavour does not fail.'

1695

1700

Then suddenly a rider will appear.
This holy man will hold you very near,
Making you lose your wits and every sense.
The ignorant will say, 'It's mere pretence!'
What do they know of fervour of this kind?
To union with Him and its signs they're blind.
The sign is meant for those who recognize—
How can this sign appear to others' eyes?

1705

Each instance that from Him a sign's arrived
 The viewer's soul has always been revived,
 Like thirsty fish when water is provided:
*'These are the Book's signs,'** by which we are guided.
 The signs appearing as a prophet's share
 Are meant for just the souls which are aware.

This talk remains short of stability—
 Forgive me for my wild insanity!
 How can one count all atoms? It's in vain, 1710
 Especially when love has snatched your brain.
 The leaves inside the park shall I then count?
 Or calculate to what bird squawks amount?
 This can't be counted, but I'll do my best
 To guide those who must undergo this test.
 Jupiter's good luck, Saturn's bad luck; none
 Can calculate their power—it can't be done.
 Yet aspects of these two one can explain,
 Such as how they can make men lose or gain,
 So that a clue about the Lord's decree 1715
 Is made known to all people equally:
 He who has Jupiter as his ascendant
 Will feel much happier and seem resplendent,
 But if it's Saturn then one must beware:
 Caution will be required in each affair—
 Of Saturn's fire if I don't help him learn
 The poor and helpless wretch is bound to burn.
*'Remember God!'** He said on catching sight
 Of us immersed in flames—He sent His light.
'Though I transcend your zekr and piety,* 1720
And images aren't suitable for Me,
 Still, when you're drunk on fancies in your mind,
 It shows your need for aids of such a kind.'
 Outward remembrance is inadequate;
 Royal descriptions are too high for it—
'He's not a weaver!' one man might declare;
 About his King is he then unaware?

Moses condemns the prayer of a shepherd

Once Moses overheard a shepherd pray:

‘O God! O God!’ he heard this shepherd say.

‘Where do you live that I might serve you there?’

1725

I’d mend your battered shoes and comb your hair,

And wash your clothes, and kill the lice and fleas,

And serve you milk to sip from when you please;

I’d kiss your little hand, and rub your feet,

And sweep your bedroom clean and keep it neat;

I’d sacrifice my herd of goats for you—

This loud commotion proves my love is true.’

He carried on in this deluded way,

So Moses asked, ‘What’s that I hear you say?’

‘I speak to my Creator there on high,

1730

The One who also made the earth and sky.’

Moses replied, ‘You’ve truly lost your way;

You’ve given up the faith and gone astray.

It’s gibberish and babble, stupid twit;

You’d better learn to put a cork in it!

Your blasphemy pollutes the atmosphere

And tears to shreds that silk of faith so sheer.

While socks and shoes might be superb for you,

How can they fit the sun? Have you a clue?

If you don’t shut your mouth immediately,

1735

A fire will burn up all humanity!

You don’t believe? Then please explain this smoke,

And why your soul turned black when you just spoke.

If you’re aware that He is God, our Lord,

Why act familiar when that is abhorred?

Such stupid friendship’s truly enmity;

The Lord’s above such acts of piety.

For relatives reserve your generous deeds—

God has no body, nor material needs:

Milk is for creatures who must drink and eat;

1740

Shoes are for those who have a need for feet.

Even when you address his chosen slave
 Select your words with care, don't misbehave,
 Since God has said, "I'm he and he is I;
 *When I was ill you never once stopped by:**
 He wasn't left alone with his disease,
 That servant who *through me both hears and sees.*"*
 Don't talk to saints without the reverence due!
 It blocks your heart, and blots your record too.
 If you address a man by Fatema's* name, 1745
 Though man and woman are inside the same,
 He'll still seek vengeance for it if he can,
 Even if he's a calm and patient man—
 That glorious name which women all revere
 Can wound a man more deeply than a spear.
 While hands and feet are great for you and me,
 They'd just contaminate God's purity—
*He was not born, nor does the Lord beget,**
 But reproducing beings are in his debt.
 Those with a body were once born, and must 1750
 Remain until death in this realm of dust;
 That is because we wither and decay;
 Unlike our Maker we must fade away.'
 The shepherd said, 'Your words have struck me dumb.
 Regret now burns my soul, and I feel numb.'
 He breathed a heavy sigh and ripped his cloak,
 Then in the desert disappeared like smoke.

God rebukes Moses for what he said to the shepherd

A revelation came down instantly:
 'You have just turned a slave away from me!
 Was not to lead to union why you came? 1755
 Is causing separation now your aim?
 As far as possible don't separate—
 *Above all else divorce is what I hate.**
 I've given each one his own special ways
 And his unique expressions when he prays;

What he thinks virtuous you deem scandalous:

 This person's meat to you seems poisonous.

I stand immune to all impurity;

 Men's pride and cunning never bother me.

I don't command for my own benefit,

1760

 But so my slaves themselves can gain from it.

For Indians their own dialect sounds best,

 But folk from Sind think theirs the loveliest.

I'm not made any purer by their praise;

 They gain in eloquence and godly ways.

And I pay no attention to their speech,

 But their intentions and the heights they reach—

I know when men's hearts have humility,

 Even if they should speak too haughtily.'

The heart's the essence, words are mere effects:

1765

 The heart's what matters, hot air He rejects.

I'm tired of fancy terms and metaphors;

 I want a soul which burns so much it roars!

It's time to light one's heart with pure desire,

 Burn thought and its expression with this fire!

How far apart the meek and well-behaved

 From ardent lovers, who may seem depraved.

Each moment lovers burn themselves away:

 A ruined village has no tithes to pay.

Don't pick at faults and call him a disgrace,

1770

 Don't wash the blood upon the martyr's face!

It suits a martyr better that he bleeds,

 And that's worth more than countless pious deeds.

Men in the Kaaba end the *qebla** rule—

 What use are boots when swimming in a pool?

You don't seek guidance from those drunken men,

 So why insist they mend their rags again?

God's lovers stand beyond all faiths, as they

 Are shown by God Himself a higher way.

A gem which lacks a seal remains a gem;

1775

 Though sorrows rain down, love's not changed by them.

A revelation comes to Moses, excusing the shepherd

Then in the depths of Moses God concealed
 Such secrets that can never be revealed;
 Into his heart poured words, pure and refined,
 Transparent just like speech and sight combined.
 He lost his wits and then found them anew,
 From pre- to post-eternity he flew.
 If I describe this it will be in vain;
 What lies beyond words how can I explain?
 This mystery would smash your brain to bits; 1780
 When writing it the firmest stylus splits.

Once Moses had heard God's reproach, he ran
 Towards the desert, searching for that man;
 He followed footprints that the shepherd laid,
 Scattering dust throughout the track he'd made.
 Footprints of drunkards are a special kind,
 Distinct from those the sober leave behind:
 He starts just like a rook, steps straight ahead,
 Then bishop-like diagonally instead, 1785
 Sometimes just like a wave's crest rising high
 And then as if a fish has slithered by;
 Occasionally he'd write his thoughts in sand
 Like fortune-tellers reading what is planned.
 On reaching the poor shepherd finally,
 Moses announced, 'I bring you God's decree:
 Don't bother with good manners any more,
 But let your heart express what's in its core!
 Your unbelief is faith, your faith God's light;
 The world through you is also safe and bright.
 Absolved by God, *Who does what He should will*,* 1790
 Speak out, and don't be scared I blame you still!
 He said, 'I passed that stage right at the start;
 I'm drenched in blood now from my love-torn heart!
 I've passed *that lote tree found at heaven's end*;
 A thousand spheres beyond, I still ascend.

You cracked the whip, which made my stallion vault
Above the heavens with a somersault!
May God stay close to human beings like me,
And may He bless your hand eternally!*
With words my current state can't be expressed; 1795
What I have said give just a hint at best.'
The image in the mirror which you see
Is yours and not the mirror's obviously;
The breath inside the reed its player's blown
Is not the reed's but the reed-player's own.
Whenever you should praise God, be aware
It's like this shepherd's crazy-sounding prayer:
Though yours seems better and more accurate,
Still, for the Lord, they're both inadequate;
So when the veil is lifted don't protest: 1800
'What's now revealed we never could have guessed.'

Through kindness he hears *zeker** you dedicate
And women's prayers though they still menstruate:.*
Blood makes her prayer impure, likewise in you
Your doubts and questioning pollute prayers too;
Polluting blood is washed away with ease;
Within you there are worse impurities,
Which, if you lack His water of pure grace,
Will not be rubbed off from your inner face.
When you're prostrate, if only your attention 1805
Were on the meaning of the prayers you mention.
Say, 'Just like my existence, it's worth naught;
You give good things for bad things I have brought!'
Earth has the mark of God's great clemency:
With dung it raises flowers seasonally.
Thus it will hide our filthy, smelly shit
And, in return, buds start to grow from it.
An infidel saw that he was behind
Mere soil in giving help and being kind:
From his existence flowers didn't grow, 1810
And so to pure things he became a foe.

He said: 'I'm going backwards as days pass;
*If only I'd remained mere dust! Alas!**
 If only I'd not chosen then from clay
 To change, I would still nurture seeds today!
 While travelling it, my journey much has taught,
 But on returning I have brought back naught.'
 His inclination was towards the earth,
 So in the journey he saw little worth.
 Turning away is lust and greediness,
 Turning to Him is truthful neediness.
 Each plant which longs to reach above soon grows
 And flourishes with life that God bestows,
 But those that bend towards the ground will be
 Sapped of their strength and wither rapidly:
 If your soul longs to soar up through the sky,
 You will gain much and soon return on high,
 But if your head points downwards, don't forget:
 You'll sink, and God loves not *the ones that set!**

1815

*Moses asks God about the mystery behind
 why oppressors prevail*

Moses said, 'Generous God, remembering You
 For one breath earns a life that's long and true!
 In humans I've seen such deformities;
 Like angels, I've complained of forms like these,*
 Saying: "Why make such forms in which to sow
 Seeds of corruption? I demand to know!
 Why light the fire of tyranny and sin
 And burn things down, like mosques and those within?"
 Their tears and blood are made to flow this way
 In order that they humbly beg and pray.
 There's wisdom, I believe, to each decision,
 But I seek certainty which comes with vision—
 "Keep silent now!" my faith demands of me,
 While my desire screams, "Seek it fervently!"

1820

1825

Your secret to the angels You've made known,
 That honey can be worth the sting You've shown,
 And Adam's light to them You made appear,
 Difficulties to them You thus made clear.'

Death's secret Resurrection Day* displays:

The secret of the leaf its fruit conveys;
 What blood and sperm make is soon known to all— 1830

Thus great things are produced by what seems small.

The students wipe their tablets clean before

They scribble on those tablets words once more;

He turns the heart to blood and tears, and then

Writes all the secrets on it with His pen—

So when you wash this tablet, realize

It will become a book before your eyes.

To make sure new foundations will be sound

One first digs up the old ones in the ground,

And everyone must dig up mud at first 1835

That *gushing waters** might then quench their thirst.

As it is healed a child weeps bitterly,

Ignorant of the treatment's mystery,

While men pay healers gold that they've collected

And welcome then the needle that's injected.

Towards the heavy case the porters run

Before the others can pick up that one;

Over this case the porters even fight,

As do the ones competing for Truth's light.

Huge burdens are the prelude to repose: 1840

Bitter things lead to bounties He bestows—

Heaven's reached through things you dislike; hell's fires

*Await those men who follow their desires.**

Your lust is a fresh, healthy branch today—

Burn it with love and reach Kawsar* this way!

Whoever's suffering in a prison must

Have earned this fate because of greed and lust;

Whoever lives in castles like a lord

Through suffering hardship has earned his reward;

And those with too much gold for men to count 1845
 Must have been patient to save that amount.
 With true sight one can disregard causation,
 But you must heed it till you reach that station!
 With souls beyond this natural world's domain,
 Such mystics can break through causation's chain;
 They see that prophets' miracles are free
 From earthly causes and dependency.
 Physicians are required to heal the sick;
 An oil-lamp is dependent on its wick,
 So for your lamp you change the wick each night— 1850
 The sun does not need wicks, though, to shine bright.
 Your ceiling must be plastered, but the sky
 Does not need plastering, so don't you try!
 Ah, Our Beloved soothed our aching hearts,
 But the retreat must end as daytime starts;
 The moon's face only in the night is shown—
 You'll find Him through a burning heart alone.
 Forsaking Jesus for your ass, you'll stray
 And like a donkey you'll be forced away.
 In Jesus is the knowledge that's divine, 1855
 Not donkeys, you who are so asinine!
 You hear the donkey and feel motherly;
 It orders asinine ways stubbornly—
 Feel sympathy for Jesus, fool, instead!
 Don't let your bestial nature rule your head.
 Just let that sensual nature weep all day,
 So, by this means, your soul's debt you can pay.
 You have obeyed that ass for years; you gave
 Your life to walk behind it as its slave.
 Your sensual, carnal soul—*put it behind.** 1860
 It must stay last while first comes the pure mind.
 Just like an ass is your base intellect:
 It only thinks of straw it can collect.
 Jesus's donkey gained a heart as prize,
 A station next to those who are most wise;
 The self's ass weakened—wisdom thus could win:
 A heavy rider makes the ass grow thin.

But if your wisdom weakens, then that donkey
Becomes a dragon, making you its monkey.
If life with Jesus makes your heart feel pain, 1865
He'll give you health soon, so with him remain!

O Jesus, you have suffered for God's sake
Because no treasure is without its snake.
Jesus, how are you coping with deniers?
Joseph, how are you with those jealous liars?
For stupid men's sake, you bear endless strife,
So selflessly you can replenish life.
With those sick, useless ones how do you live?
Apart from headaches, what can such trials give?
You're radiant like the morning sun, while we 1870
Fill our time with fraud and hypocrisy!
You're honey while we're vinegar; these two
When mixed together form a healing brew.
We've added too much vinegar, please pour
More honey in—don't hold back any more!
This type of action's frequent from our kind:
Too much sand in the eye makes one turn blind.
From you the act that would be typical
Is granting wretches something valuable.
Your heart was roasting in the tyrant's flame, 1875
Yet '*Guide my people!*'* was what you'd exclaim.
Since you are incense, if they make you burn,
To a sweet-scented realm this world will turn.
You're not that incense flames diminish, and
You're not a soul trapped by depression's hand.
The source of incense can't be set alight;
How can the wind put out your holy light?
From you the heavens gain their purity;
Your wrath tastes sweeter than your grace to me.
Unkindness from a sage is better than 1880
The kindness coming from a stupid man:
'Enmity born of his intelligence
Is worth more than love due to ignorance.'*

*How a prince troubled a sleeping man into
whose mouth a snake had entered*

A wise prince saw a snake begin to slide
 Into a man's mouth, which was open wide;
On seeing this he didn't hesitate
 To hurry there, but he arrived too late.
Not only wise, he liked to help all men—
 He hit the sleeping man awake again.
This made the man run off in dread and fear, 1885
 To hide beneath a fruit tree which was near.
A lot of rotten apples from that tree
 Had fallen off—the prince said, 'Eat! They're free.'
So many apples then he gave to him
 That they spilled out, his throat full to the brim.
'Prince, why come after me? What did I do?
 Was there a time when I had bothered you?
If you've a problem with me, raise your sword—
 Kill me immediately, my noble lord!
What bad luck to have now come to your view! 1890
 Happy are those who don't set eyes on you!
When no misdeed or crime has been committed,
 No one believes such cruelty is permitted.
With words blood gushes from my mouth as well—
 God give what he deserves: send him to hell!
He kept on cursing him, while that wise one
 Continued beating him and shouting: 'Run!'
The blows made him run at a rapid pace
 And so he'd keep on falling on his face.
He felt weak, stuffed with food, and sleepy too; 1895
 His face and feet became soon black and blue.
The prince on horseback drove him on so fast
 By evening this man vomited at last:
Out of him came both good and rotten food
 As well as that snake which had dared intrude!

On seeing that a snake came out, he ran
And fell prostrate before the helpful man;
Once he had seen that vicious, ugly snake,
His pains subsided—gone was every ache!
He said, 'Are you the Angel Gabriel? 1900
Or God Himself? You are so merciful!
Blessed the moment I came in your view;
I then was dead—now I've gained life anew.
Just like a mother you came after me,
And, like an ass, from you I tried to flee.
A mule flees its own master—what a fool!
Due to his kindness, he pursues that mule;
Not due to thought of loss or benefit,
But lest the hungry wolf should ravish it.
Happy the men who get to see your face 1905
Or suddenly arrive near to your place!
The purest souls will sing aloud your praise;
My previous prattle could I but erase!
O lord and king, O eminent emir,
Ignorance spoke, not me—don't be severe!
If I'd got wind of this and found a clue,
I wouldn't then have said such things to you.
I would have sung your praises constantly,
If you had given just one hint to me;
But you stayed silent, frightening me instead— 1910
Without a word you pounded on my head.
My head became so giddy, filled with pain;
To start with it had just a little brain!
Forgive me please, you handsome, virtuous man!
Forget my gibberish please if you can!' 1915

'If I had given hints,' the prince then said,
'Your bravery would have dissolved through dread.
If I had told you all about the snake,
Sheer terror would have made your spirit quake.
The Prophet said, "If I should let you know 1915
That in your soul you have a wicked foe,

Gall-bladders of the bravest would then burst
 And none would move or act, as if they're cursed."
 Its helplessness no man's heart then would bear,
 His body wouldn't have the strength for prayer;
 Like mice before a cat each man would die,
 Or lambs who see a huge wolf passing by;
 No plan of action would for him remain—
 That's why I helped but chose not to explain.
 Just like Robabi,* silently I smile; 1920
 Iron I bend like David all the while,*
 Because my hand can do unheard of things,
 Such as provide for wounded birds new wings.
 "God's hand is over their hands"* is well known:
 God thus declares our hands are like His own.
 A very long hand He let me acquire
 Which stretches past the heavens, and much higher;
 My hand displayed its skills once to the sky—
*The moon was split** when these skills caught its eye!
 My silence was because of your weak brain: 1925
 God's power to weak men one can't explain.
 Lift up your head from slumber, comprehend:
God knows what is the best course in the end.
 The strength to eat enough you'd not have found
 To make you spew it all out on the ground.
 I carried on; your curses I ignored;
 I prayed in silence, "*Make things easy, Lord!*"
 I didn't have permission to tell you,
 But still I had to show you what to do,
 And due to inner pain I prayed inside: 1930
*"They know not, God; my people please still guide!"**
 That man who'd just escaped from death like this
 Bowed down before him, saying: 'What sheer bliss!
 May you gain your reward from God, good man!
 This wretch can't thank you in the way He can.
 God will say thanks to you, my chief and guide;
 My small mouth can't contain fit praise inside!
 Hostility from sages is like this:
 Their poison will instead fill you with bliss.

An idiot's friendship, though, leads to perdition,
As shown to you by this profound tradition:

1935

On putting trust in a bear's fawning and good faith

One day a dragon dragged a bear behind;

A brave man came to help, for he was kind.

The succour of this world is men like these

Who heed the shrieks of victims and their pleas;

The cries of victims everywhere they hear

And, like God's mercy, brave men will rush near.

These props supporting this world's weaknesses,

These healers who cure hidden sicknesses,

Are justice, mercy, and love that is pure—

1940

Like God, they can't be bribed or made impure!

Ask one: 'Why do you help immediately?'

He'll say, 'They're helpless and in agony.'

Lion-like men hunt chances to be kind;

Pain is the medicine they wish to find:

Wherever pain is, there the cure will go;

Where hills slope down the water's bound to flow—

Since you need mercy's water, bend down too,

Get drunk from mercy's wine which flows to you!

Mercy keeps filling up your head with grace;

1945

Don't sink for one delight to a low place!

Courageous man, ascend now like a dove

And hear sweet *samā** music from above!

Take out the plugs of evil whispering,

So shouts from heaven in both ears will ring!

Remove the hair which covers now your eye,

To see the lofty cypresses on high!

Cough up the phlegm that's blocking up your head,

So God's wind fills your nostrils up instead!

Don't let a trace of bile and fever stay,

1950

So you'll taste sweetness in this world today!

Don't keep it limp—insert man's remedy

And make the women climax rapturously!

The fetters on your spirit's feet undo,
 So it can soar up as it used to do!
 The shackles on your hands and neck now break—
 New fortune then from heaven you can take.
 If you can't reach the Kaaba of His grace,
 Your helplessness before the Lord to place,
 Then your recourse is weeping bitterly— 1955
 His mercy is the nurse and remedy.
 Nurses and mothers both anticipate
 The babies' cries; to comfort them they wait.
 God made your needs like babies', so He'll hear
 When you should weep; then milk He'll make appear.
 'Call upon God!'* God said—keep weeping, so
 The milk of His kind love will start to flow.
 If winds should howl and rainclouds start to pour,
 It's for our grief—be patient a bit more!
 God said, '*Find in the sky your daily bread!*'* 1960
 Why cling then to this lowly place instead?
 Like a ghoul's voice, your fear and desperation
 Will lure you to the pit of degradation.
 The calls which beckon you beyond the sky
 Have come down for your ears' sake from on high,
 But every call that beckons you to lust
 Is howling from a wolf you shouldn't trust!
 Height here is not a physical dimension—
 The soul's and wisdom's peak is the intention:
 Causes are higher than effects, men say, 1965
 Iron and stone than sparks they send away.
 Higher than vain men sits the true fakir,
 Though next to them this great man might appear;
 Nobility determines who comes first—
 The seat placed furthest from the top's the worst.
 Iron and stone in action's course are prior,
 And so it seems that these two should rank higher.
 That spark they send out, since it is their aim,
 Must be superior to them all the same:
 Iron and stone may come before their goal, 1970
 But they're the body while the spark's the soul.

In sequence even if the spark's posterior,
In nature, still it is that pair's superior:
The branch precedes the fruit found on the tree,
The fruit's worth so much more though obviously;
Because fruit is the branch's aim, it's true
Fruit's first, branch last, although the branch first grew.
When that bear screamed for help, a lionheart
Released it, pulling those huge claws apart.
He showed such cleverness and manliness 1975
To slay that dragon which had caused distress.
The dragon has much strength, but lacks a mind;
Above yours too there's a superior kind.
Your own intelligence you see—why then
Do you not see its source? Head there again!
What now is low came from above, so turn
Your gaze to lofty heights and you will learn
That this gives light with which to truly see
After a period of perplexity.
Accustom now your eyes to those light rays— 1980
Unless you are a bat, fix there your gaze!
Seeing conclusions proves you've gained that light;
Feeding your lusts means that your grave's in sight.
Great men see all potential traps ahead,
But fools hear of just one and are misled;
That single trap makes them stray even faster,
Proudly each one will even shun his master:
Like Sameri,* who'd learnt one skill with pride
From Moses, and then vainly turned aside;
From Moses though he'd learnt his cherished skill, 1985
He closed his eyes to his great teacher still.
Moses then used a new skill suddenly
Which stunned and left for dead vile Sameri.

Book-knowledge fills your head seductively;
It beckons you and seeks authority—
Don't lose your head! Be like your own foot's sole
And then take refuge with the Mystic Pole!*

Though you be kings, don't look down with disdain;
 Though you be honey, seek his sugar-cane.
 Your thought's a form, while his thought is the soul. 1990
 Your gold's false; mines belong to this great Pole.
 Now seek yourself in him, you're really he—
 Fly to him, coo as doves do constantly!
 If you don't want to serve him now with care,
 You're in the dragon's jaws just like a bear.
 Perhaps the teacher will deliver you
 And pull you from all harm as he can do.
 You have no strength, so weep in fits all day;
 You're blind, so from the guide don't turn away!
 Are you less than a bear? Cry when in pain! 1995
 The bear which cried found pain would not remain.
 God, melt like wax this stony-hearted man.
 Make his cries sweet and worthy, as You can!

A blind beggar said, 'I have two types of blindness'

There once was a blind man who used to say:
 'I'm blind in two ways; pity me and pray!
 Be twice as merciful and twice as kind—
 I'm stuck with this sad fate; I'm doubly blind!
 Someone said, 'One of them we all can see,
 But what's the other blindness meant to be?'
 He said, 'My voice is ugly like the bray 2000
 Of donkeys, doubling blindness in this way:
 My ugly voice induces so much grief
 It steals all listeners' love just like a thief.
 Wherever it is heard it will create
 Much grief and rage, and it makes people hate—
 Double your mercy for two blindnesses!
 Make room for one who always trespasses!
 Through his complaint, his voice's ugly sound
 Made people in compassion gather round.
 Because he'd owned up, he would soon rejoice— 2005
 His heart's voice gave his tongue a lovely voice.

But if his heart's voice had been bad as well,
Three blindnesses would have locked him in hell,
Though saints who share God's grace unselfishly
Could then have touched him as a remedy.
When this man's voice turned soft and sweet, it then
Could melt like wax the stony hearts of men.
The infidels' cry is an ugly sound—
It won't find sympathy from those around;
'Be silent!'^{*} has an ugly voice in mind,
That of bloodthirsty dogs among mankind.

2010

The bear's wail draws compassion, different
From your unpleasant and ignored lament.
With Joseph, like a wolf you have behaved;^{*}
Innocent blood you drank, for you're depraved!
Empty yourself of what you've drunk—be sick!
And seal the wounds at which you'd always pick!

*Completion of the story of the bear and that fool who
trusted that it would show good faith*

When from the danger that bear was set free
By that kind man who showed much bravery,
Just like the dog of Sleepers in the Cave^{*}
It then became that man's most faithful slave.
Its master rested, for he'd struggled hard,
And so the bear served as his bodyguard.
A passer-by asked, 'What has happened here?
How come the bear treats you as someone dear?'
The dragon story he began to share;
The passer-by said, 'Never trust a bear!
Friendship with fools is worse than enmity—
It should be chased away immediately!'
'You speak from jealousy. Heavens above!
Don't focus on its wildness but its love!'

2015

2020

'Love from a fool is false seduction, friend—

My "envy" will prove better in the end.

Join me, drive off this bear—leave it behind!

Don't choose the bear, forsaking your own kind!

'Mind your own business! I loathe jealousy.'

'This is my business, but you cannot see.

Good man, I'm not less than a savage bear;

Be my companion, leave that wild beast there!

My heart now trembles with concern for you—

2025

Don't walk with such a bear as fools would do!

My heart's not stirred without a cause or aim;

It is from God's light, not a specious claim:

A true believer, *I see by God's light*—*

Flee this fire-temple of your sorry plight!

The things he said had no effect at all;

Men's ears are blocked by their suspicion's wall.

The good man took his hand; he pulled away:

'You are no friend of mine! You've gone astray,

So leave at once! Don't show concern for me!

2030

Meddlesome fool, stop now your sophistry!

'I'm not your foe,' the passer-by then said,

'It would be best to come with me instead.'

He snapped back, 'I am sleepy. Let me be!'

The passer-by said, 'Friend, submit to me,

To sleep in the protection of a sage,

Safe with a mystic from the wild bear's rage.'

He doubted still this passer-by's intent

And turned away to show his discontent:

'Perhaps this liar wants to injure me?

2035

He is a thief or beggar obviously.

Perhaps he made a bet with friends that I

Would prove an easy man to terrify?'

Not one good thought came to his mind; confusion

Ruled him because his mind had much pollution.

All positive thoughts he saved for the bear;

The two belonged together like a pair.

Before a sage a bear he chose to trust—

This fool thought it affectionate and just.

*Moses says to one who worshipped the golden calf:
'What happened to your intelligence and scepticism?'*

Moses stopped a deluded man to say: 2040
 'You're cynical because you've gone astray.
About my prophethood you had such doubt
 Though I had strong proof and am good throughout:
Many miraculous feats you saw me do,
 But doubts and fancies just increased in you.
The devil's whispering tricked you, so you would
 Sneer sceptically about my prophethood;
I forced apart the sea's waves perfectly,
 So that from Pharaoh's evil you'd be free.
For years from heaven manna was bestowed 2045
 And, through my prayers, from stone fresh water flowed—
These things and many more just as diverse
 Did not reduce your false doubts—you're perverse!
A golden calf once mooed through sorcery
 And you prayed, "You're my God!" immediately!
Bowling to it succeeded then to sweep
 Your doubts away—your cold brain went to sleep.
Why didn't you doubt all the lies it said?
 Before that object why bow down your head?
Why didn't you suspect its idle claim? 2050
 To trap you with its magic is its aim.
You dogs, who is that liar Sameri
 To carve a god out for humanity?
Why let his lies make you all of one mind,
 Leaving all thought of problems far behind?
Why worship a mere calf when it has lied,
 Although my prophethood you all denied?
You bow to it through sheer inanity;
 Your brain is Sameri's prey tragically.
From God's light you have turned your eyes away, 2055
 Because you're ignorant and far astray—
Your brains be damned, and what you choose to do;
 It is correct to kill vile fools like you!

What did the golden calf say when it spoke?
 The love in your hearts how did it provoke?
 Much greater miracles I have displayed;
 By worthless men, though, God is not obeyed.'

Base men are smitten with stupidity,
 As futile men admire futility!
 Since each one is beguiled by its own kind, 2060
 A bull and lion playing you won't find.
 For Joseph can the wolf feel sympathy
 Unless through cunning, as his enemy? *
 If it leaves wolfishness, it's then a friend—
 A dog can be a human in the end.*
 When Abu Bakr could identify
 The Prophet, he said, '*This face doesn't lie.*'
 Bu Jahl did not feel empathy one bit—
 He turned away although *the moon was split*. *
 We hid the truth from mystics with love's pain, 2065
 But hidden from them it did not remain.
 Those ignorant, who from love's pain are free,
 Were often shown the signs but couldn't see.
 One must keep clean the mirror of one's heart
 To tell the lovely and the vile apart.

*The man who gave advice leaves behind the one deluded
 by the bear after counselling him as much as possible*

That passer-by left after that attack;
 'God give me strength!' he said and then went back.
 'I gave advice and argued—how I tried!
 But vain thoughts in his heart just multiplied.
 Blocked is the way of counsel for this man, 2070
 And so "*Withdraw from them!*" * is my sole plan.'
 When your cure makes the sick man's brain unsound,
 Find a true seeker and read from '*He frowned*'. *

The blind man's come to seek God earnestly—
Don't force him off due to his poverty!
You're eager for the notables to turn
To Islam, so the rest from them will learn;
Mohammad, you have seen some chiefs tonight,
And so you're happy with the thought they might
Become supporters of your new religion, 2075
For they rule Arab men and Abyssinian;
To Basra and Tabuk* you hope such news
Will spread—*their kings' faith subjects always choose.*
That's why you turned away from one who's blind
But rightly guided—this upsets your mind.
'This is a chance that's very rare,' you said,
'You can return another day instead,
So why now while I'm busy bother me?
This counsel is not due to enmity.'
Mohammad, that blind man is worth much more 2080
To God than mighty emperors by the score!
Remember: '*People are like mines*'* —take heed!
One mine in worth a thousand may exceed:
One ruby or cornelian mine is worth
Much more than all the copper mines on earth.
Mohammad, copper here gives us no gain—
A breast is needed full of love and pain.
Don't shut the door! A blind man full of light
Has come—give him advice! It is his right.
If a few fools reject you, persevere! 2085
Don't be made bitter even if they jeer!
If a few fools should charge you with a crime,
God will serve as your witness in good time.
'I don't seek recognition now,' he said,
'When God's one's witness one feels no more dread.
If a bat should gain something from a sun
That proves the sun's not an authentic one:
The curses of such bats is evidence
That I'm the bright sun with true radiance;
To rose-water if beetles ever crawl, 2090
That proves it's not true rose-water at all;

If counterfeits for touchstones should cry out,
 That they are proper touchstones we must doubt;
 The burglar longs for nights and not for days—
 I'm day not night; I shine with such bright rays.
 I am discerning and act like a sieve:
 For chaff, room to pass through me I won't give.
 The chaff from wheat I strive to separate,
 The differences between them to relate;
 I serve as God's own weighing scales this way;
 The light from heavy I make clear as day.
 Calves think that cows are gods—they fantasize!
 For donkeys this is fitting merchandise.
 I'm not a cow that calves may call with moos,
 Nor a rough thistle that a camel chews.
 My enemy thinks that he's wounded me—
 He's wiped dust from my mirror helpfully!

2095

*How a madman sought to ingratiate himself
with Galen,* and Galen became afraid*

Galen told his companions, 'Bring for me
 Such and such medicine and remedy!
 'Master of all the sciences,' one said,
 'That's medicine to treat the mad instead—
 Far be such drugs from your superior brain!
 He said, 'I was stared at by one insane:
 He gazed at me with joy and wouldn't leave,
 Then tried to flirt and fiddled with my sleeve!
 If there were no congeniality,
 How could that wretch then turn his face to me?
 He must have seen his own sort in his mind
 To have approached, and not a different kind.'
 When a connection's made between a pair,
 There must at least be one thing that they share—
 Birds of a feather fly together, while
 Fools dig their graves by sitting with the vile.

2100

2105

*The reason why a bird flew and fed with a bird of a
different feather*

A certain wise man said, 'Once I could see
A crow content in a stork's company;
Amazed, I sought to find a telling clue
About what was in common for these two.
I was perplexed, but when near them I came
I noticed then that both these birds were lame!
Would a great falcon, one of noble birth, 2110
Keep company with owls of lowly earth?
The former is a lofty sun, while that
Vile latter type is like a hell-bound bat.
The former, free from flaws, reflects pure light;
The latter begs because she's lost her sight;
A moon that shines upon the Pleiades
Next to a worm in dung beneath the trees;
A Joseph, who is Jesus-like as well,
Next to a wolf or ass that needs a bell;
To Placelessness* while one has flown away, 2115
The other like a donkey longs for hay.
A rose tells beetles, with a mystic tongue,
'Disgusting stench, you smell much worse than dung!
You flee our rosebush proud of your rejection,
But that's due to our rosebush's perfection:
Since I'm protective, I bang on your head;
"Wretched one, keep away from us!" I've said,
"If you stay longer in my company,
People might think that you belong with me."
For nightingales this lovely field is fit, 2120
But beetles all belong on piles of shit.'
Since God has spared me from contamination,
Why would He raise filth near my lofty station?
The vein in me like theirs God cut away—
Evil-veined ones will not reach me today.
The sign of Man from pre-eternity
Is angels bowing when his rank they see,

And Satan still not bowing down his head—
 'I am the chief and king!' he claimed instead.*
 If Satan had bowed down too, then Mankind
 Would have been creatures of a different kind.
 Prostration, for the angels, was a trial;
 Man's witnessed also by that foe's denial—
 His proof is in the angels' recognition
 And also in that petty cur's sedition.
 This discourse could go on, but let's return—
 The ending of this tale we want to learn:

2125

*The outcome of the reliance of that deluded man
 on the bear's fawning*

As the man slept, the bear pawed flies away,
 But they would whizz back there without delay;
 Repeatedly it pawed them from his face,
 But they kept whizzing back at rapid pace.
 The bear grew angry and went off alone
 Towards a hill to fetch a massive stone;
 When it returned it saw a small fly leap
 Onto the man's face while he stayed asleep—
 It raised the stone and slammed it heavily,
 Hoping to force that pesky fly to flee!
 It crushed its sleeping master's head instead,
 Proving the truth of what the wise have said:
 'The fool's love is just like love from a bear:
 His hate is love, his love hate, so beware!'
 The fool's word is so unreliable;
 Believing him is not advisable.
 Never believe him, even if he screams!
 Liars break oaths, and none is what he seems.
 This one lies even when he doesn't swear,
 So don't fall for such oaths and lies—beware!
 His brain's the prisoner, his self the chief;
 He'll swear on the Qur'an to claim belief.
 Don't heed his promises! He doesn't care
 If he should break them—he will easily swear!

2130

2135

2140

Sometimes his ego will become enraged
That with a serious oath you want it caged:
If prisoners shackle their own ruler, he
Will break those shackles off immediately,
Then pound them on their skulls which lack a brain,
And throw the oath at them with much disdain.
Don't wait for him to *honour oaths he swore!**
Don't tell him, '*Keep your promise!*'* any more.
The one who places in the Lord his trust 2145
Will cling to Him and shun the realm of dust.

*How the Prophet visited a Companion,
and an explanation of the benefit of visiting the sick*

A notable Companion once was sick
And looked so thin he seemed more like a stick.
The Prophet came to visit him one day,
Since kindness was his nature and his way.
There's benefit in visiting sick men—
The good will soon come back to you again:
The first is that the man who's suffering
Might be a mystic chief or lofty king—
Lacking the heart's eye, stubborn man, how could 2150
You tell mere kindling from pure aloes' wood?
There's treasure in this world, so don't despair!
In every ruin you'll find treasure there.
Approach each dervish who can now be found;
Find proof he's true, then don't stop circling round!*
Since you can't see beyond a person's skin,
Assume that all have treasure deep within—
Though not a master, he may seek the light;
Though not a king, he may still be a knight.
You need a fellow traveller on this course, 2155
Whether he goes on foot or on a horse.
If he's a foe, good still comes from this act:
Kindness turned many foes to friends you lacked,

Or it at least made their hate dissipate,
 Because it is a balm which can heal hate.
 And there are further benefits, my friend,
 But it would take too long to reach the end.
 The gist is: be a friend to everyone,
 Carve friends from stone just like the sculptor's done.
 And if they make your caravan grow longer, 2160
 It can fight robbers off when it is stronger.

God spoke to Moses: 'Why didn't you come to visit me in sickness?'

God once told Moses off, 'You who've been blest,
 And even seen the moon rise from your breast;
 With my own holy light I made you shine—
 When I was ill where were you, friend of mine? '*
 Moses said, 'God, who's free from any flaw,
 What riddle is this? I am filled with awe!
 God asked him then, 'Why didn't you enquire
 About me then, as friendship would require?'
 Moses said, 'Lord, You've no deficiency; 2165
 My mind's confused—explain this please to me!
 'A special slave of mine fell ill,' God said,
 'He is I:* understand these words you've read!
 His weakness is as if it were my own,
 His sickness too; I don't leave him alone.'
 Whoever wants to be near God must sit
 With God's saints—this has the same benefit.
 If you're cut off from them, then your starved soul
 Will seem a part kept separate from the whole,
 For if the devil keeps you separated 2170
 From such great people, you'll feel alienated.
 If you should stay apart a little while,
 I warn you—it's due to the devil's guile!

A gardener divides a Sufi, a jurist, and a Sharif from one other

A gardener one day saw behind the leaves
 Inside his orchard three who looked like thieves:

A saint, a Sayyed,* and a jurist, who
Each looked a knave and rascal in his view.
The gardener thought, 'I have much evidence,
But as a group they'll give a strong defence;
Against three men I cannot cope alone— 2175
I have to split them, trap each on his own.
I'll lead each to a different location,
Then fool each one when he's in isolation.
To send the Sufi off he used deception,
Then changed his image in his friends' perception:
He told him, 'Please go to the house and bring
A rug for these friends, one fit for a king!'
And when the Sufi left, he told the others,
'Jurist and Sayyed, listen now dear brothers:
From jurists' fatwas, we learn what to eat; 2180
Their knowledge helps to make our faith complete.
And you're a prince of high nobility,
A Sayyed, from the Prophet's family.
Who is that Sufi, mean and greedy too,
To sit beside as lofty kings as you?
Split his head open when he comes this way,
Then in my orchard as my guests please stay!
What's a mere orchard? I'd die willingly
For your sakes, for you are so dear to me.'
With sly suggestions he beguiled the pair— 2185
Don't split so readily from friends, beware!
They'd sent their Sufi friend to fetch a rug;
Now after him with a stick went this thug.
The brutish gardener asked, 'Did Sufism
Teach you to enter my land on a whim?
Was this taught by Jonayd or Bayazid?*' 2190
Which one said, "Stroll in; to ask there's no need"?'
He struck the helpless Sufi on the head,
Splitting it open, and left him for dead.
The Sufi cried, 'My life will quickly end;
Protect yourselves! Learn from your former friend!
Did you consider me a foreigner?
I'm less one than this bastard murderer.

What I have drunk, for you two still remains;
 Each base wretch this reward for certain gains.
 The world's a mountain and the words you say
 Are echoes which return to you one day.'

After the gardener killed the Sufi, then

He used a pretext of this kind again:

'Dear Sayyed, please go to the house for me; 2195

Tell them: "Bring breakfast down immediately!"

Tell Qaymaz when you reach the orchard's gates

To bring the goose and cakes on silver plates!

He then said, once he'd sent him on his way,

'Wise friend, you are a jurist men obey,

But he claims he's a Sayyed for a pose—

The things his mother did who really knows?

His mother's words will you count as sufficient,

Trusting a woman—their brains are deficient.

Links with the Prophet and Ali he'll claim— 2200

This world has many fools who say the same.'

Each person who was born through fornication

Thinks saints are just the same despite their station:

When whirling gives a man a giddy head,

He thinks the building is what spins instead.

What that vile gardener said is just the same—

The Prophet's family are far from blame!

If he were not some sick apostate's child,

The Prophet's kin he wouldn't have reviled.

The jurist soon agreed with this cruel plan; 2205

He hurried then to kill the trusting man:

'Ass, to my orchard who invited you?

Was stealing what the Prophet passed to you?

A lion's cub resembles him, but how

Are you like the great Prophet—tell me now!

This wretch who praised the Prophet's family

Did what a Kharijite did to Ali;*

How long will monsters like Shemr and Yazid*

Show hatred for his kin in word and deed?

He struck the Sayyed savagely, who said, 2210
 ‘Jurist, from dangerous waters I have fled.
You’re now alone; stand firm; your time has come—
 Endure the body-blows now like a drum!
Even if I were not a Sayyed, still
 I’d be no worse than this beast who would kill.
To this cruel enemy you handed me—
 A dreadful recompense you’re bound to see.’

The gardener killed the Sayyed, then returned:
 ‘What kind of jurist are you? Have you learned
That it should be your fatwa, amputee,* 2215
 To enter and not bother asking me?
Did you find proofs for this in the *Mohit*?
 Is it addressed at length in the *Vasit*?’*
He answered, ‘Beat me! You know well the rule:
 Deserting friends earns this fate in our school.’

Resumption of the story of the sick man and the visit of the Prophet

Love’s bond demands you visit friends who’re ill,
 And it has more demands you must fulfil.
The Prophet soon decided to drop by,
 And saw his follower about to die.
If you stay far from God’s elite, you are 2220
 From the Lord’s presence also very far.
Parting from your companions brings distress,
 So how can parting from such kings cause less?
Seek the kings’ shadows! Hurry up and run!
 Their shadows make you brighter than the sun.
If you should travel, leave with this intention;
 And if you stay home, give this full attention!

A shaikh tells Bayazid, ‘I am the Kaaba, so circumambulate me!’

For Mecca Bayazid one day set out
 To make the pilgrimage of the devout.

At every town he passed along the way 2225
 He'd seek what local sages had to say:
 He'd wander asking, 'Who here has the light?
 Who only leans on truth's supporting might?'
 God said, 'When on your travels always seek
 The few who take from me each word they speak.'
 Seek this real treasure, not mere worldly gain;
 This world is secondary; let me explain:
 Wholesome wheat is the reason why we sow
 Their seeds, but straw as well from them will grow;
 If you were to sow straw, no wheat would rise, 2230
 So seek a holy man—he's the true prize!
 Head for the Kaaba when it's time to go
 And you'll see Mecca too, as all must know:
 On the *me'raj*, God was the Prophet's aim;
 He saw the Throne and angels all the same.*

A story

A new disciple built a house one day.
 The master passed and saw it on his way,
 Then questioned his disciple as a test,
 Knowing that his intentions were the best:
 'Why did you put a window over here?' 2235
 'To let the light come in to make things clear.'
 'That's secondary; it's not like breathing air—
 Your primary need's to hear the call to prayer!'

While travelling, Bayazid searched far and wide
 To find his epoch's Khezr, the perfect guide.
 He came across a master very soon
 Who spoke like saints, though hunched like a new moon;
 His heart received light, though his eyes were blind,
 Like elephants seeing India in their mind:
 With eyes closed, you see things that cause delight, 2240
 But when they're opened none remain in sight.

While you're asleep the mysteries are all shown;
Your heart's a window viewing the unknown.
The mystic even dreams while wide awake—
Bow down and feel the ground beneath him shake!
So Bayazid then asked him, 'How are you?'
This man was poor and had a family too.
'Well Bayazid, why did you take this road?
Where is it that you're carrying that load?'
'Complete the Hajj* is what I aim to do.' 2245
'When you move on what will you take with you?'
'Two hundred silver coins is all I've got;
I've tied them to this garment with a knot.'
'Just walk around me seven times instead;
That's better than the Hajj,' the old shaikh said.
'Then hand your coins to me, my generous friend—
Complete your Hajj thus! Reach your journey's end!
You've run to Safa,* entered purity;
You've done the Omra;* live eternally!
He judges me much loftier, I swear, 2250
Than that mere house of His. Let us compare:
That Kaaba is the home of piety,
But I contain His deepest mystery;
Inside the Kaaba no one's ever stepped
And my pure heart none but God will accept;
When you have seen me, you have seen God too;
You'll circle then the Kaaba that's most true.
To serve me is obeying God's decree,
So don't suppose He's separate from me—
Open your inner eye, see if you can 2255
Perceive the light of God inside a man!'
This mystic truth pierced into Bayazid
Just like an earring, making him take heed,
For he had gained much wisdom from this friend,
Enabling him to reach the journey's end.

*How the Prophet perceived that the cause of that man's sickness
was arrogance in prayer*

The Prophet saw the man was sick, and gave
 Kind care to his Companion in the Cave.*
 On seeing him, that man recuperated,
 As if that moment he had been created.
 'Sickness bestowed good fortune thus on me— 2260
 This sultan came to visit generously;
 Well-being and good health came when this king
 Without attendants chose relief to bring!
 Thank God for sickness, fever, and distress,
 And for the agony of sleeplessness,
 For in my dotage God has sent for me,
 Through His kind mercy, every malady!
 Kind God has sent this backache too, so that
 At midnight I will wander like a bat—
 So I don't sleep at night like buffaloes, 2265
 Through grace and mercy God such pain bestows!
 God's mercy's stirred by my fragility
 And even hell has now stopped threatening me.'

Pain is a treasure—blessings lie within:
 The fruit's flesh shows once you have peeled the skin.
 Dear brothers, living in the dark and cold,
 And bearing grief and pain as well, we're told
 Is Life's Draught* and the pure intoxication,
 Since all ascents must rise from a low station:
 In autumn, spring lies dormant till its turn, 2270
 And autumn does in spring too, you'll soon learn—
 So stay with desolation, grief, and strife,
 And, in your own death, hope for a long life!
 But when your self says it is rotten here,
 Since it opposes truth, choose not to hear!
 Oppose it, as from prophets this instruction
 Has come down to us: fight your own destruction!

Consulting others is a must, my friend,
So you will not be left shamed in the end:
Prophets knew stratagems that could confound 2275
All men, and turn the hugest millstones round.
Your self seeks to destroy you, to mislead
And dazzle simple men, so please take heed!
The people asked, 'Whose counsel do we need?'
The Prophets said, 'The sages you should heed.'*
'Can a mere woman or a child lead too,'
One asked, 'When they've no brain or point of view?'
'Still seek out their advice!' the Prophet said,
'But do the total opposite instead!'*
Worse than a woman is your carnal soul, 2280
For she is just a part, while it's the whole—
If you consult your carnal soul, then do
The opposite of what it tells you to!
If it commands to fast and pray a lot,
It is a trickster hatching a new plot!
Follow your carnal soul's advice this way:
Do just the opposite! Do not obey!
You can't cope with its clever sophistry,
And so you need to find good company.
Through other intellects, much strength we gain, 2285
As sugar is perfected in the cane.
From the self's plots I've seen such shocking actions—
Its magic steals one's vision through distractions.
It makes you promises from its rich store,
Which it has broken many times before;
If for a century your life extends,
Each day it will give new excuses, friends—
False promises it claims are really true;
It ties up all the power left in you.

Come, Light of God Hosamoddin, I know 2290
Without you plants in such weak soil won't grow!
From heaven's peak a curtain has been spread
By curses from a lover whose heart bled.

It's fate alone that can transform this state;
 Brains are made giddy by the power of fate.
 The snake can turn into a fiery serpent,
 But on this path it soon becomes subservient—
 Serpents become mere sticks and snakes can too,
 The soul of Moses falls down drunk through you!*
 'Grasp it and do not fear!'* the Lord has said, 2295
 So, in your hand, snakes turn to sticks instead.
 King, please show us *your hand which has turned white!**
 Reveal a new dawn from the darkest night!
 A hell has blazed forth—won't you breathe a spell,
 For that's more threatening than the sea to hell?
 The self's so tricky it shows foam to you,
 Or hellfire to show it can warm things too;
 Small to your eyes this foe likes to appear,
 So you might think it's weak and have no fear.
 It's like an army which was large in size, 2300
 But still seemed tiny in the Prophet's eyes,
 So, fearlessly, he launched a swift attack—
 If he'd known its true size he'd have held back.
 That was God's favour—yours deservedly,
 Mohammad, so you'd not be cowardly.*
 God made jihads of both kinds* seem so small
 To you and your companions who stand tall,
 To make it simpler thus to live *with ease*
 And spare you *hardship** and anxieties.
 Their seeming less brought victory that day, 2305
 For God was his friend, teaching him the way.
 If you can't boast of God's support like that,
 Don't dare mistake a lion for a cat;
 If you mistake a hundred foes for one,
 Deluded, you will fight instead of run.
*Zo'l-Faqar** too may look like a mere stick
 And rampant lions like meek cats; this trick
 Will make the fool feel brave and join the brawl,
 This ploy will easily entrap them all—
 The fools will journey fast on their own feet 2310
 Towards the fire, ignoring deadly heat.

He'll show what seems a blade of straw one day;
You'll blow on it, to send it far away—
That blade has pulled up mountains, so beware,
It makes the world weep while it has no care!
God made the river seem a shallow pool,
So that the giant Og would drown, the fool!*

Blood flows, but looks like musk on His command;
The deep sea too can look just like dry land:
Blind Pharaoh thought the sea was dry, and tried 2315
To walk on it with arrogance and pride:
He stepped into the bottom of the sea,
For Pharaoh's eyes could not see properly.
Encountering God brings vision to your eyes,
But God won't meet with fools who fantasize:
Poison which kills looks tasty to this fool—
He'll take the path which leads straight to the ghoul.

Heavens, you look down on our tribulation;
Don't spin too quickly, treat well God's creation!
You're a sharp dagger pointing down at us; 2320
Your murderous blade is long and poisonous.
Heavens, learn from God's mercy for our sakes!
Don't hurt the harmless ants as well as snakes!
By the truth of that One who made you spin
Above the realm that we are living in,
So you might change with mercy in your heart
And choose then not to tear our roots apart!
You nurtured us, for light you would bestow,
So that from soil and water we might grow.
By the truth of that Monarch who created 2325
You pure, through whom you've been illuminated,
Who made you flourish and for long endure,
So some claimed, 'They're eternal! We are sure!'
Prophets revealed your origins, and so
We thank God they were sent to let us know:
A man knows that a house is really transient,
But that poor spider hanging in it doesn't;

Gnats cannot know the garden's age: they fly,
 But, born in spring, by winter they will die;
 The lowly tree worm has no clue at all 2330
 About how its tree looked when it was small;
 If one should know, its essence then is known
 As intellect—a worm in form alone.
 Intellect takes on many different guises;
 Distinct from them, it constantly supprises.
 Born higher than the angels long ago,
 You're now a gnat descending far below;
 Although your intellect could soar the skies,
 Blind imitation will not let you rise.
 Knowledge through imitation is Man's bane, 2335
 A borrowed thing they've thought is theirs in vain.
 Ignorant knowledge all of us must flee
 And then embrace complete insanity.
 Flee now from profit to the furthest end!
 Drink poison not the Water of Life, friend!
 View those who praise you as your enemies,
 Give up your wealth and other niceties!
 Leave safety, head for danger fearlessly!
 Swap your good record now for infamy!
 I've tried to think for too long with my head, 2340
 But now I'll make myself insane instead.

*Dalqak excuses himself to the ruler who asked him
 why he had married a whore*

The ruler asked Dalqak,* 'Did you propose
 In haste to that whore? Dalqak, heaven knows,
 You should have told me what you planned to do,
 And we'd have found a good, veiled bride for you!'

He said, 'I've married nine like that before.
 All caused me grief, since each became a whore.
 I chose this whore, who's not at all devout,
 Because I wondered how she might turn out.
 So many times I tried to use my brain, 2345
 But now I'll seek the fruits of being insane!'

*How an enquirer managed to trick a clever man
who had feigned madness into talking*

A man once said, 'I seek a man who's wise
To tell a problem, hoping he'll advise.'
'In our town,' he was told, 'your quest's in vain—
There's only one sage here and he's insane:
He rides a cane as if it were a horse
And runs with children, showing no remorse.
But he has wisdom which inspires—the sky
Is not as vast, the twinkling stars as high.
Life to the Cherubim his glory gives; 2350
Hidden in depths of madness this man lives.'
Don't think all madmen have worth mystically,
Don't worship calves just like a Sameri!
A real saint has so clearly shown to you
A million mysteries and secrets too,
But, lacking light, you've still not understood,
Confusing filthy dung for aloes' wood.
Saints veil themselves with feigned insanity—
How can the blind tell their identity?
Open the eye which makes things truly known— 2355
A master you'll then see beneath each stone!
To such an eye, which can serve as a guide,
Each cloak hides someone Moses-like inside.
It takes a saint to make a saint well-known;
To whom he pleases he grants this alone;
You can't know who he is just by your brain,
Because he makes himself appear insane.
When thieves steal something from a man who's blind,
Can he detect it simply through his mind?
He can't know who they are if he can't see, 2360
Even if they should taunt him spitefully.
If a dog bites a man with failing eyes,
That rabid mongrel he can't recognize.

A dog attacks a blind beggar

A dog attacked a blind man down a lane
 Just like a lion no one can restrain;
 Dogs like to bite the dervishes they hate,
 Though to such men the moon will sink prostrate.
 The dog's barks made him feel so vulnerable;
 He told the dog it should be honourable:
 He said, 'Brave lion of the hunt, of you 2365
 I beg don't hurt me, though you're able to!
 Once when obliged, a sage praised to the sky
 A donkey's tail with titles which rank high.
 This blind man said, compelled, 'What will you win,
 Great lion, from a man like me, rake-thin?
 Wild asses are what other dogs pursue,
 While you've trapped this blind man who's feeble too;
 Your peers hunt the wild asses in the plain,
 While you've trapped me in this dark, narrow lane.'
 The wise dogs hunt wild asses, you will find, 2370
 The worthless dogs alone attack the blind!
 If dogs should learn the truth, false paths they'll flee,
 To hunt their prey in forests lawfully;
 Clever dogs fight with cunning like a knave;
 One even joined the Sleepers in the Cave! *
 Such dogs of the hunt's leader can catch sight—
 How do they see him, God? What is that light?
 The blind don't recognize him from his glance,
 Not due to lack of sight, but ignorance;
 They're not more sightless than the earth below, 2375
 And yet the earth, through God's grace, sees its foe—
 It aided Moses, since it saw his light,
 But then it swallowed Korah in one bite! *
 It quaked to blow apart each false pretender;
 To '*Swallow, earth!*'* it hurried to surrender.
 Earth, water, wind, and fire are unaware
 Of us, yet of the Truth remain aware.

We humans easily recognize most things,
But not God's warners and the truths each brings.
They *shrank from it*,* as their imagination 2380
Was blurred too much by mixing with creation.
'We all detest this life!' wise men complained,
'With animals alive, from God detained.'
You'll feel like orphans if you live apart
From people, but God seeks this kind of heart.
When a thief steals from blind men, you will hear
Each blind man start to wail in desperate fear
Until the thief tells them, 'I was the one
Who stole from you; it was so easily done!'
How can the blind their own thieves recognize 2385
When there is no light coming to their eyes?
When the thief speaks, grab him and hold him fast
Until he tells you what he pinched at last.
The real jihad means grabbing the thief too
And making him tell what he stole from you:
He stole the kohl through which your eyes gained light;
Once you retrieve it, you'll reclaim your sight.
The wisdom which your heart used to contain
From the heart's master you must now regain.
Despite your eyes and ears, if you are blind, 2390
You can't trace thieves from marks they leave behind.
Seek from the man of heart, not marks instead—
Next to him, other men are like the dead.

The man who sought advice approached his goal,
And said, 'Advise me, master of my soul!'
He answered, 'We are closed, so go away!
We're not revealing mysteries today;
If I could find the way to Placelessness,*
I'd sit like shaikhs free from this world of stress!'

*How a law-enforcer summoned to gaol a drunkard
who was totally drunk*

One night, a law-enforcer, standing tall, 2395
 Noticed a drunkard sleeping by a wall.
 He shouted, 'Wretched drunk, what did you drink?'
 'What filled the jar,' he answered with a wink.
 'But what was that? I want this clarified!'
 'That which I drank!' 'The truth don't try to hide!
 What kind of drink? I'm sure it was forbidden.'
 'I drank what in the wine-jar was kept hidden.'
 Like this they went on, reaching no conclusion;
 A donkey stuck in mud knows such confusion.
 He told the drunk, 'Say: "Ah!" without ado! 2400
 The drunk instead would shout aloud 'Hu! Hu!'
 'I said, "Say, 'Ah!'" Why then shout "Hu!" at me?'
 'Because I'm glad while you're in misery:
 An "Ah!" expresses suffering and distress,
 While drunkards' chants are howls of happiness.'
 'Get up right now! I cannot comprehend.
 Your clever sophistry, drunk, has to end!'
 'What is my state to you? Please go away!'
 'You're drunk! I'm taking you to gaol today.'
 'Leave me alone! Your efforts are in vain: 2405
 Since I possess naught, what can you now gain?
 I would have gone straight home if I could walk,
 Then we would not have met and had this talk—
 If I had reason and ability,
 I'd sit like shaikhs on thrones of dignity!'

*The enquirer once again draws that great one into
conversation in order to learn about his state*

That seeker asked, 'Great horseman on a cane,
 Ride your steed here a moment! I'll explain.'
 'Speak quickly then!' he came to him and said,
 'My horse has a bad temper and wild head;

If you're too slow, it's bound to buck and kick—

2410

Explain what you are seeking; make it quick!

He felt this wasn't the right situation,

And so he joked instead on this occasion:

'I seek a good wife from this neighbourhood—

For my type do you know one who'd be good?'

'The types of women in the world are three:

One treasure-trove, two which cause misery.

The first is yours completely when you wed;

The second half-yours, half-apart instead;

The third's not yours at all, not for one day.

2415

Now that you've heard this, I'll be on my way,

So that you won't be kicked at by my horse

And fall flat on your face due to its force.'

The shaikh rode with the children, so this man

Shouted to him then loudly as he ran:

'Come back and give a proper explanation!

Please clarify your wife-classification!'

He said, 'The virgin is yours totally;

Through her you'll be released from misery.

A childless widow is half-yours alone;

2420

And one who's had a child you'll never own—

By her first husband she became a mother,

And so her love and care is for another.

Get going now before my horse kicks you!

It can cause much harm, if it chooses to.'

The shaikh went off and started soon to roar,

Calling the children to himself once more.

The seeker shouted out to him again:

'I have another question, pride of men!'

The shaikh went back and said, 'Speak, don't delay!

2425

That darling boy I love now wants to play.'

He asked, 'When you are so refined and wise,

Why act so strangely? What's this exercise?

True intellect could not have clarified

The things you know—why now in madness hide?'

He said, 'From vulgar people I must flee,
 For as the city's judge they've chosen me.
 When I refused, they stubbornly screamed, "No!
 There's no one who knows half the laws you know!
 It would be wicked and unlawful too 2430
 For someone else to judge instead of you.
 Islamic law does not give us permission
 To choose a man who has less erudition."
 So I've become mad through necessity,
 Though inwardly I'm as I used to be.'

I am a ruin hiding a rare brain;
 Showing that treasure would make me insane.
 Madmen are really those who've not gone mad—
 They don't flee, though the situation's bad.
 My knowledge is the truth and absolute; 2435
 The vulgar, common folk it doesn't suit.
 I am just like a field of sugar-cane—
 I eat it and it grows from me again.
 Knowledge from reason or blind imitation
 Is ruined by the audience's negation;
 Since it does not enlighten, it's mere bait,
 Like worldly knowledge, which one shouldn't rate.
 Men will seek knowledge for so many goals,
 But not to find a way to free their souls:
 They burrow at each angle like a mouse 2440
 Which has been driven too far from the house—
 Though it can't find a way back to the light,
 It keeps on struggling in the dark all night.
 If God sends wisdom's wings, this mouse will soar
 Like birds, and be a lowly mouse no more.
 But if it doesn't seek wings, it will fall
 And have no hope of reaching stars at all.
 Rational knowledge, which lacks soul inside,
 Loves just to see its audience satisfied;
 During debates it boasts and brags a lot, 2445
 But if its customer leaves, it's worth naught.

My buyer's God; He drags me up above,
For *God alone has bought us** through His love.
The beauty of the Lord meets my blood-price;
It's lawful nourishment and will suffice—
So leave the penniless here, let them die!
What can a piece of worthless clay now buy?
Never seek, buy, or eat clay; those who still
Insist on eating clay will soon fall ill.
Consume your heart with love, stay young through grace! 2450
Theophanies bring colour to your face.
Lord, Your bestowal we could not have earned;
Your mercy's ways are hidden, as we've learned.
Take our hands! Buy us! Lift the veil in front,
But please keep covered our embarrassment!
Buy us again from this vile self of dirt!
Its knife has reached our bones and makes them hurt.
This solid chain who'll loosen and undo
For helpless ones like us, Pure King, but You?
Apart from You, with Your grace like the sun, 2455
Who'll open this strong lock, All-Knowing One?
Let's turn to You now from ourselves! You're dearer,
Than our own selves; to us You're truly nearer.
You taught this prayer as well through Your kind grace—
How else could roses grow in this vile place?
Except through Your supreme munificence,
Flesh and blood can't convey intelligence;
And how could light rays give sight to each eye
So that our vision should reach to the sky?
And how else could a simple flap of skin 2460
Enable streams of wise words to begin
To flow to ears, which are no more than holes,
And from these to the orchards of men's souls?
Such orchards are the realm of the divine;
Ours are derived from them, which is a sign:
Those are the founts of joy which He'll bestow—
Quickly recite: '*Beneath which rivers flow.*'*

Conclusion of the Prophet's advice to the sick man

The Prophet asked this question to discover
 His good friend's ailment, so he might recover:
 'Did you pray in a way that's dangerous 2465
 Or, unaware, eat something poisonous?
 Try to remember now the prayer you said
 When your self's plots consumed you with such dread!'

He said, 'I can't remember—help me, please,
 To bring back to my mind that prayer with ease!'

The Prophet's light-bestowing presence led
 His thoughts back to the last prayer that he'd said;
 That window which links all hearts it passed through
 And flashed light which tells false apart from true.

He screamed, 'Dear Prophet, it's come back to me— 2470
 That prayer I said before so foolishly,
 When I was overwhelmed by sin, the cause
 Of my attempts in vain to clutch at straws!
 Your threat to sinners had filled me with dread
 About the heavy punishment ahead;
 I felt so helpless, in a state of shock,
 Bound in strong chains with no key for the lock:
 No point in patience, no route from this hell,
 No more repentance, no chance to rebel!

Like Harut and Marut,* I'd deeply sigh 2475
 With sorrow, "My Creator, tell me why!"
 Harut and Marut chose from harm to flee
 To Babylon's pit, there immediately
 To be chastised, instead of in the grave;
 And each of them was a most cunning knave.
 By doing this they might have chosen well,
 Enduring smoke instead of flames in hell—
 The trials in that world sound limitless,
 So suffering pain in this world seems much less.

Happy is he who fights a true jihad 2480
 Against his body, steers it from what's bad;

In order to flee what awaits him there,
The yoke of worship here he'd rather bear.
My prayer was: "In this short life, please deal out
The punishment that You have warned about,
So in the next world I might be exempt."
Begging God like this I chose to attempt,
Then I was filled with suffering and alarm—
Grief has deprived my soul of peace and calm;
I can no longer meditate or pray;
I've lost awareness of all things today.
If I'd not seen your face just now, O you
With holy scent and pure all the way through,
In bondage like this, I'd have died alone,
But, glorious king, kind sympathy you've shown!

2485

He said, 'Don't make again that supplication.
Never uproot yourself from your foundation!
You feeble man, have you the strength now to
Carry the mountain which He'll place on you?'
He said, 'My sultan, I repent! Hear me!
I'll never brag again so recklessly!
This world's the wilderness Jews wandered in;
You're Moses—we are stuck here due to sin;
Moses's people travelled constantly,
But ended up at the start tragically:
For years we have been travelling like his nation,
But we are also trapped at this first station.
If Moses had been with us satisfied,
The proper path he would have clarified.
But if we'd made him feel despair and frown,
How could a feast from heaven have come down?
How then could fountains have gushed out from stone?
How could we have survived out there alone?
Rather, fire would have come in the feast's place,
Flames darting up towards each person's face.
Since Moses has been in two minds, we know
He's sometimes like a friend, sometimes a foe:

2490

2495

His anger sets fire to what we possess,
 His mercy drags back arrows of distress.

To clemency how can such anger change? 2500

From You, Great One, this kindness isn't strange.

To praise one when he's present will bring shame,

So I instead use Moses's sweet name;

Otherwise, how should Moses still allow

Mention of others while You're here right now?

A thousand times we broke our covenant,

But Yours seems, like a mountain, permanent:

Our covenant's like straw in winds of change,

Yours like a mountain—no, a massive range!

Commander of all changes, by Your power, 2505

Have mercy on our changing every hour!

We've seen ourselves and realize our shame—

King, don't put us on trial! We've tasted blame.

From further shame protect us from today,

Most Generous God to Whom we humans pray!

You're limitless in beauty and perfection,

While we're prone to distortion and defection!

Send down Your limitlessness, Generous Lord,

To wipe out the corruption of this horde!

We were a patch, but now a thread is all 2510

That's left: A ruined city now one wall.

Save what is left, Lord! Listen to our plea,

So that vile devil won't dance joyfully!

Not for our sakes, but out of that same grace

Through which You first helped men who'd lost their place:

You've shown Your power—please show mercy too!

Our form is flesh and blood now due to You.

If this prayer makes Your wrath grow even more,

Teach us the right prayer now, Lord, we implore!

Just as when, from Your garden, Adam fell; 2515

You helped him flee from Satan and from hell.

Adam is not less than that evil cheat,

So, in this fight, how could he taste defeat?

It led to Adam's gain eventually,
 But Satan was soon cursed with jealousy:
Being short-sighted, he sold all his gains
 To win one bout, but the real war remains.
He set fire to their fields, where seeds were sown,
 But winds blew that same fire back to his own.
Due to the curse, the devil could not see 2520
 And thought his tricks could harm his enemy,
But all his guile harmed his own soul instead,
 So Adam was his devil, whom he'd dread.
A curse is something which distorts your sight,
 Making you jealous, proud, and full of spite,
Hiding the fact: whoever does a wrong—
 It will come back to him before too long:
He'll see all masterstrokes, but back to front,
 So he'll be in check-mate and impotent.
But if he sees himself as naught, he'll view 2525
 His honour as destroyed and worthless too;
He will feel pain if he should look inside,
 And this pain will remove the veil of pride.
Until the mother's womb with pain feels torn
 There is no way her baby can be born.
The covenant is in your pregnant soul;
 Enlightened counsel plays the midwife's role:
'There is no pain,' the midwife has to say,
 But there must be some pain to pave the way.
The one without pain is a thick-skinned thief; 2530
 He'll say, 'I am God,' and still feel no grief—
To say 'I' in this way is a disgrace,
 But, when it's true, to say 'I' has a place:
Mansur's 'I' was a blessing certainly,
 Pharaoh's 'I' was a curse eternally.*

Cocks crowing at the wrong time lose their head,
 A warning that one mustn't be misled!
Slaying the self is true decapitation
 In holy war, and pure renunciation;

It's like removing scorpions' stings—then who 2535
 Would need to kill them for harm they might do?
 Or pulling out a poisonous snake's fangs, so
 It might be spared the rocks that men would throw.
 The self's slain by the master's shade alone—
 Hold tightly his cloak's hem! Your self disown!
 It's through God's aid that you perform this action:
 The strength you find comes from His own attraction.
 Heed well: '*You didn't throw that time you threw!*'*
 Whatever your soul gains comes from Him too.
 He'll take your hand, your burdens He will bear— 2540
 Long for a breath from Him! Do not despair!
 Don't lose hope, though you've stayed away for long!
 You've heard He holds on and His grasp is strong:
 For long His grace has held you in embrace;
 Not for one breath is He not where you face.
 If you still need proof and an explanation,
 Choose '*By the morning*'* as your recitation!
 Since bad things too come from Him, you feel doubt—
 His grace can have no flaws; it's pure throughout:
 Giving bad things is part of His perfection— 2545
 Just listen to this tale which aids reflection:
 A painter painted two works on a wall,
 One stunning and one with no worth at all:
 He painted houris and fair Joseph's face,
 Then demons' heads in the remaining space.
 Both types of forms show His intelligence;
 It's not His ugliness, but eminence:
 He makes the vile as ugly as can be—
 All ugliness surrounds them totally—
 To manifest His knowledge's perfection; 2550
 Deniers of this fact must face rejection.
 Don't claim he can't make ugliness as well!
 He makes the faithful and the infidel;
 Belief and unbelief both testify
 That He is God—the pair prostrate will lie:
 Believers fall prostrate, obedient,
 Hoping that He will be with them content;

The infidel bows, but against his will—
His worship's goal is something different still;
The king's fort he must keep in good repair, 2555
But he claims he commands, though it's hot air:
This rebel claims the whole fort he now owns,
Although the king will take back what he loans.
Believers conquer just for their King's sake;
For them no personal profit is at stake.
The ugly tell God, 'You made our forms too—
Since you make fair and ugly, we blame you!'
'Great King of Beauty,' beautiful men say,
'You've made me free from flaws—to You I pray.'

*How the Prophet gave advice to that sick man and
taught him a supplicatory prayer*

The Prophet told that sick man, 'Pray each night: 2560
"O You who makes what's difficult seem light,
In this world give us good things, this I pray,
And also give good things on Judgment Day!
Make our path like a garden in the spring;
You are our destination, Noble King!"'
Believers at The Gathering* will say:
'Dear angel, isn't hell along the way
Which infidel and faithful men pass by?
But we did not see flames and wonder why?
Here is the paradise and court of grace, 2565
So where precisely was that wretched place?'
The angel will reply: 'That greenery
Which at a certain point you all could see—
That was hell, where men face horrific trials;
To you it was an orchard raising smiles.
Since you waged war against that vile deceiver,
Your firebrand self, which is an unbeliever,
To make your soul become completely pure,
And quenched its fire for God's sake, you're secure:
The fire of lust with flames that steal men's sight 2570
Has changed into true guidance's soft light;

Anger's fire turned to gentleness through you,
 And ignorance you've changed to knowledge too;
 Greed's fire is now unselfishness instead,
 That thorn-like envy now a flower bed.
 Since you have put these flames out on your own,
 Ahead of time and for God's sake alone,
 And turned to orchards fiery selfishness,
 And sown in them the seeds of faithfulness
 (So now the nightingales of chant and prayer 2575
 Sing sweetly by their streams without a care),
 And answered God's call to attract down here
 Water to make your self's flames disappear,
 Our hell seems a rich pasture now to you—
 It's rich with rosebuds from your privileged view.'

What's the reward for acting well, my friend?
 Kindness and goodness with a pleasing end.
 'We are self-sacrificing,' you would say;
 'Before His attributes we pass away.'
 Whether insane or a sharp, cunning knave, 2580
 The Saqi made us drunk with wine he gave.
 We lay our heads down to the Lord's commands,
 Gambling our lives, which we place in His hands.
 While in our hearts is the Beloved's portrait,
 Our work's to serve, and our own souls to forfeit—
 Wherever suffering's candle has been lit
 A million loving souls are burned in it;
 The lovers who are found inside this space
 Are moths around the candle of His face.*
 Head to where they are straight with you, dear heart, 2585
 Where coats of mail from harm keep you apart,
 Where, when you're victimized, they'll comfort you
 And make room for you in their own hearts too;
 Inside their hearts they'll make for you a place,
 Then fill you like a cup with wine of grace.
 Settle among their souls and do it soon!
 Make your home in the heavens, radiant moon!

They'll open the heart's book like Mercury,*
To thus reveal to you each mystery.
Stay with your kin, don't roam like a lost foal! 2590
A stray piece of the moon must seek the whole:
Why should a part stray far from its own source?
Why mix with those who'll block the path by force?
Watch how one type transforms into another,
How hidden things are brought to view, my brother!
Like fickle women you love flattery—
From such vain falsehoods when will you break free?
Sweet words and flattery you choose to buy,
And like vain women you don't question why.
Reproachful slaps from mystic kings help more 2595
Than praise from those who've strayed far from His door—
Take these kings' slaps, shun honey from the base!
Become a real man through the saints' pure grace!
Bestowing robes of honour is their role;
Through spirit, body can be changed to soul.
If you should see a destitute man here,
That he has left his teacher will be clear;
His heart's own fancy he preferred to find—
His efforts failed, though, since his heart is blind;
His teacher's wish for him if he'd achieved, 2600
High rank and honour he'd then have received—
The one who for the world's sake flees his master
Is fleeing from good fortune even faster.

You've learnt skills, so material wealth you'll earn—
Now a new mystic skill you need to learn.
In this world you've become rich and well-dressed,
But in the next how will you pass the test?
Learn mystic skills, so in the next world too
You'll profit from the mercy shown to you.
That world's a city bustling with much trade— 2605
Don't feel content with worldly gains you've made:
The earnings in this world, God has declared,
Are toys when with the next world's they're compared—

You're children wriggling on each other to
 Imagine having sex as adults do.
 Children act like greengrocers when they play
 Their pointless game to pass the time away;
 The 'grocer' goes home hungry with no gain;
 When 'shoppers' leave, alone he must remain:
 This world's a playground and the night is death— 2610
 You go home empty-handed, out of breath.
 Mystical gain means inner zeal and love,
 Capacity to catch light from above.
 Your vile, base self wants just material gain;
 For worthless profit you'll endure much pain,
 But if your self seeks noble gain from you,
 This is a plot—be careful what you do!

Satan makes up Mo'aviya, saying
'Get up, it's time for prayer!'

Mo'aviya* was fast asleep one day
 Inside his palace, while the rest would pray.
 He had locked up the palace from within, 2615
 Tired of his subjects' visits and their din—
 Someone shook him, but when he looked around
 Whoever it had been could not be found.
 'None has the right to enter!' he declared,
 'To show such brazen arrogance who's dared?'
 He searched for him, so he could have him banished,
 But found no trace at all, for he had vanished.
 Behind the curtains then Mo'aviya tried
 And found the culprit had gone there to hide;
 He shouted, 'What's your name, wretch? Answer me!' 2620
 He said, 'I am cursed Satan; can't you see?'
 'You came to wake me up just now, but why?'
 Answer me truthfully and don't dare lie!

*How Satan tried to fool Mo'aviya with pretence
and how Mo'aviya answered him*

He said, 'The dawn prayer's period nears its end—

You must run quickly to the mosque, my friend!
"Rush to good deeds before they disappear!"

The prophet shared this pearl which is so clear.'
Mo'aviya said, 'It's not your intention

To guide me to good deeds with what you mention,
For if a burglar in my house should say:

"I'm guarding it for you, my friend, today,"
Should I then trust that thief? How can thieves know
About good deeds and what God will bestow?"

2625

Again Satan answers Mo'aviya

He said, 'I was an angel at the start,

Travelling the path of God with all my heart.*
Mystical travellers, as good friends, I've known,
Including those who now sit near God's throne.

You can't forget skills you learnt long before,

Just as your first love lasts for evermore;
Although while travelling stunning sights you'll see,
Love of your home still lasts eternally.

I've also got drunk from the wine He poured,
When I was a famed lover of the Lord.

My cord was cut for love of Him alone,
And in my heart seeds of His love were sown.
From fate I've seen good days which made me sing;

Water of mercy I've drunk in the spring—
Wasn't I planted by His mercy's hand,

Raised thus from non-existence to this land?
He showed such kindness that still can't be told—

In His approval's rose-garden I've strolled;
His hands of mercy on my head He'd place
And open for me fountains of His grace.

2630

2635

In my first days who found the milk for me?
 Who rocked my tiny cradle lovingly?
 From whom did I receive my milk, from whom?
 None but the One who fed me in the womb.
 That nature which with milk comes into men—
 How can that nature be drained out again?
 The Sea of Grace reproach to us might roar, 2640
 But grace and mercy never close their door.
 The substance of His coin is loving grace,
 While wrath, to Him, is like an alloy's trace.
 He made the world, so kindness we would meet;
 His sun caressed all atoms with its heat.
 His separation's pregnant with His wrath
 Only so we'll seek union like a moth;
 This separation's meant to make souls burn,
 So union's value they can truly learn.
 The Prophet said once, it has been related: 2645
 "God said, 'For doing good deeds I created:
 I made the creatures, so they'll gain from me,
 So that my honey they'll eat joyfully,
 Not so I would myself make any gain—
 I don't snatch coats from paupers in the rain!'"
 He barred me from His presence a few days,
 But on His face I kept my constant gaze—
 "Amazing! Wrath from such a face!" I sighed.
 With lesser things the rest are occupied.
 I don't look at effects—they've little worth; 2650
 Mere transient things to transient things give birth.
 I look at grace, from which the rest all start;
 Subsequent transient things I tear apart!
 I spurned prostration as I was possessive:
 It was through love; my act was not dismissive.*
 All jealousies we feel arise from love,
 The wish to sit with none but Him above;
 Love's natural outcomes are such jealousies,
 Like saying "Bless you!" after people sneeze.
 There was no other space left on the board 2655
 When "Make your move!" I was told by the Lord;

I made the one move open, lost the game,
And threw myself into the trial of blame.
In agony I taste deep pleasure still:
I've been check-mated by Him—that's His will.
Good man, how can we ever find release
When we're trapped here like a backgammon piece?
From the Whole One how can its part escape,
Even one given such an ugly shape?
Whoever's in this realm lives in the flames,
But God can help us reach the loftier aims.
Both faith and unbelief are equally
His own work, part of His rich tapestry.'

2660

Again Mo'aviya exposes the deceitfulness of Satan

Mo'aviya said, 'This may be correct,
But your role here I totally reject:
You've pounced and robbed so many men like me,
Digging holes, sneaking in the treasury.
You're fire, and you'll burn me, I understand—
Whose clothes have not been ripped by your base hand?
Bonfire, since it's your nature thus to burn,
You've no choice, no direction left to turn.
That He makes you burn things is your own curse,
And you rule all the thieves and make them worse.
You spoke with God directly long ago—
Who am I to face up to such a foe!
Like hunters' whistles is your sophistry,
Attracting birds to traps deceitfully:
A hundred thousand birds we have seen falling,
Thinking your sound's a true friend who is calling;
Each hears from far above your whistle's sound
And then swoops down to get trapped on the ground.
Your trickery made Noah's people mourn—
Their hearts were roasted and they felt forlorn.*
You helped destroy the Aad community,
Throwing them into fits of agony.*

2665

2670

You had a part in stoning Lot's vile nation;
 They drowned in filth for their abomination.*
 You shredded into long strips Nimrod's brain—
 You've caused so many troubles and much pain!*
 Like a philosopher's was Pharaoh's mind; 2675
 His cleverness was false—you made him blind.
 Bu Lahab you led into flames to burn;
 Bu'l-Hakam to Bu Jahl you helped to turn.
 On this world's chessboard of extreme disasters
 You have check-mated millions of grand masters.
 Your challenging game-plan when you attack
 Has burned our hearts while yours has turned pitch black.
 Ocean of plots, our guile is just one drop;
 Mountain, we're simple atoms, so please stop!
 Who is spared plotting for which you're renowned? 2680
Except those God protects, the rest get drowned.
 The brightest stars you have made disappear,
 And you have weakened armies most would fear.'

Satan again responds to Mo'aviya

Satan told him, 'Untie the knot, behold!
 I am the touchstone which detects real gold.
 I give God's test to dogs and lions too,
 Like gold and counterfeit—I see what's true.
 How can I ever blacken gold that's real;
 Like money-changers I can only deal:
 I guide to goodness every passer-by, 2685
 And break off only branches which are dry.
 Why is it that I place the fodder here?
 So that the beast's identity is clear:
 If to a deer a wolf should bear a child
 And you're unsure if it is tame or wild,
 Drop grass and bones before it to discern
 From the direction it should choose to turn:
 If it moves to the bones, then it is clear
 That it's a wolf; if to the grass a deer.

Forces of wrath and mercy were once mated— 2690
 The world of good and evil they created.
Put bones and grass before men in their bowls,
 Food for their selves and food good for their souls—
If one devours the self's food, he is base;
 If the soul's food, a credit to his race.
If you should serve the body, you're a fool;
 If you dive in the soul, you'll find the jewel.
Though good and evil are two separate things,
 They both do one job for the King of Kings.
The prophets all do good deeds and obey; 2695
 Their foes serve lust and they live in its sway.
I can't make good men bad—I'm not their Maker!
 I call to God's path—I'm not their Creator!
I can't make fair men ugly suddenly;
 I'm just a mirror for each kind, you see!
An Indian burnt his mirror when in pain,
 "This makes men's faces look black!" he'd complain,*
"It's not my fault!" the blameless mirror said,
 "Blame the one who has polished me instead!
He made me tell the truth and never lie, 2700
 The fair from ugly to identify."
I am a witness—gaol is not for me;
 I don't belong there. God will make you see!
When I see a fresh sapling taking root
 I nurture it until it bears some fruit,
But when I see a dry and bitter tree
 I chop it down, so musk from dung can flee.
The dry tree asks the gardener, "With such force
 You chop my head off —don't you feel remorse?"
"Shut up you ugly thing," this man will yell, 2705
 "Your dryness is your own fault—go to hell!"
"I'm straight not crooked!" then the tree will say,
 "How can you chop remorselessly away?"
"If you were blest and lucky," he'll reply,
 "Even if crooked, you'd be moist not dry:
Water of Life you would have then been shown
 And thus become drenched, not dry as a bone.

Your seed and root were bad initially,
 And you're not grafted to a healthy tree!"
 If one grafts bitter branches with the sweet, 2710
 Those sweet ones soon a sorry death will meet.'

Mo'aviya is severe with Satan

Mo'aviya said, 'You must stop your lying!
 You can't convince me, so don't bother trying!
 I am a foreign trader, you're a con—
 I won't buy clothes from you or put them on.
 Don't stare at my belongings, infidel!
 No faithful man to you his goods would sell!
 You're not a customer whom I would choose;
 You act like one but it is just a ruse.
 What does he now have hidden up his sleeve? 2715
 God save us from this foe who can deceive!
 If he says one more clever thing to me,
 He'll rob me of my wits then totally!'

Mo'aviya complains to God about Satan and asks for His help

'O God, this talk of his is just like smoke—
 Please help or it will blacken my new cloak!
 I can't beat Satan in debating bouts,
 For in both base and great men he sows doubts:
 Adam, to whom He taught the names,* can't race
 This wretched cur who moves at lightning pace.
 From paradise he forced him out as well; 2720
 Just like a fish in Satan's net he fell:
 'We've wronged ourselves!'^{*} he cried out in distress.
 His cunningness and guile is limitless!
 For every word he speaks, harm lurks behind;
 A thousand evil tricks are in his mind.
 Men's honour he'll tie up and cause to dwindle,
 While men's and women's lusts this foe will kindle—

Satan, man-burner, trouble-stirrer, why
Did you awake me? Tell the truth, don't lie!

Satan again exhibits his deceit

'Whoever has bad thoughts,' then Satan stated, 2725
 'Can't hear the truth though often it's related,
For everyone who nurses doubts soon finds
 Doubts grow when reason enters in their minds.
Words enter minds and make those people sick:
 A knight's sword changes thus to a thief's stick.
Silence is the correct form of reply;
 Talking with fools is madness—don't you try!
So why complain to God about my role?
 Complain instead about your carnal soul!
Too many sweets will cause spots in the end 2730
 And fevers which destroy your health, my friend.
You swore at blameless Satan, but denied
 That this deception comes from deep inside;
It's not from Satan, but from fickle you.
 Like foxes you are chasing sheep's tails too:
If a sheep's back-side should attract your eyes
 It is a trap, but you don't realize,
Because that back-side now controls your brain—
 Hot lust is something you fail to restrain.
The Prophet said, "*Love for things makes you blind* 2735
 And deaf; by your own soul you're undermined."
Don't see things upside down, and don't blame me.
 Since from greed, spite, and evil I am free!
I did a bad thing but am now contrite;
 I wait for day to end my mournful night.
People accuse me of their own vile sins:
 The blame for sins on me each person pins;
Although the helpless wolf is hungry, still
 They claim it's spoil and always eats its fill;
When it's so weak it can't move, all the same, 2740
 "It's overeaten—look!" such people claim.'

Mo'aviya again stands firm before Satan

Mo'aviya said, 'Truth will set you free;
 Justice demands you speak the truth to me,
 So tell the truth to flee a grasp so tight—
 Your trickery won't make me stop this fight!'

Satan said, 'Truth from lies how can you tell
 When futile fancies hold you in their spell?'

'The Prophet gave a sign which makes me bold,
 The touchstone which tells false gold from real gold:
 He said, "*Lies give your hearts uneasiness,*
While honesty brings joy and peacefulness."

2745

Lies cannot calm one's heart; try as you might,
 Water and oil won't mix to give out light.
 True speech is comfort for the heart when shared—
 Truth is the bait with which the heart is snared.
 The heart falls ill if it fails to discern
 The taste of different things—it needs to learn.
 From sickness when a healthy heart recovers,
 The taste of truth and lies it then discovers.
 When Prophet Adam's greed for wheat increased,*

2750

It harmed his health—strength in his heart decreased;
 He listened then to your lies and seduction
 And drank the poisonous drink of self-destruction.
 He couldn't tell a scorpion from wheat grains:
 When drunk with lust discernment leaves men's brains.
 People are drunk with passion and with lust—
 That's why in your false tales they place their trust.
 From passions if a man has separated,
 With mysteries he'll be illuminated.'

*A judge complains about the trial of holding his office,
 and his deputy responds to him*

A new judge was once seen begin to cry;

2755

The deputy asked, 'Judge, please tell me why!

It's not the time for tears and lamentation;
It's time for joy and much congratulation.'
He said, 'Can someone who's unsure give judgment
On those who know what happened while he doesn't?
Those two foes know the truth about their case,
So, when the judge does not, where is his place?
He's ignorant of facts and their conditions,
So with their lives how can he make decisions?'
'These two foes should remember what is right, 2760
But they're unsound, while you shine out God's light,
For you're not biased and won't compromise;
Immune to flaws, you give light to our eyes.
Lust blinds those two and makes their thoughts unsound,
Burying all their knowledge in the ground.
Flawlessness can make ignorance transform
To knowledge, while unsoundness will deform.
So long as you don't take bribes, you will see;
If greed rules you, you'll lose sight totally.'
I've kept my nature free from greed's thick rust, 2765
By eating fewer morsels of vile lust;
My heart has grown as radiant as the sky
For it can tell what's true and what's a lie.

Mo'aviya makes Satan confess

Mo'aviya demanded, 'Why wake me
When you are wakefulness's enemy?
Like opium you put everyone to sleep,
Like wine all wisdom from our minds you sweep.
Confess the truth to me now, I implore!
I know what's right, so don't cheat any more!
From others all I hope is that they'll show 2770
What their true nature is, so I will know.
I don't seek sweetness out in vinegar,
Nor take a weak man as a warrior;
Unlike the infidels, I do not yearn
For idols as gods to whom I can turn;

From dung I don't expect to breathe musk's smell,
 Nor seek dry bricks from rivers or a well—
 I don't expect from Satan this convention:
 That he should wake me with a good intention.'
 Satan spoke many words of trickery,
 But he resisted them all critically.

2775

Satan says truthfully to Mo'aviya what was on his mind

Reluctantly then Satan chose to tell:
 'It was for this I woke you, so heed well:
 So you would join the others for the prayer,
 Follow the Prophet thus by reaching there,*
 For if the prayer's time passed while you were sleeping,
 In deep despair you would have started weeping;
 In shame and pain, tears would have filled your eyes
 And flowed as if from flasks or heavy skies.'
 From acts of worship all gain a sweet taste,
 So missing out seems such a tragic waste—
 Than this deep pain a hundred prayers earn less;
 What's prayer next to light gained through neediness!

2780

*The excellence of the remorse felt by that pious
 one for having missed congregational prayer*

A man approached the mosque to join the prayer,
 But saw men coming out as he reached there.
 He asked, 'What's happening to all these men?
 Why are they exiting the mosque again?'
 'The Prophet has already prayed,' one said,
 'The congregation's prayers the Prophet led—
 Why have you come so late? Do you not care
 The Prophet has already led the prayer?'
 He breathed such a deep sigh it gave off smoke
 And spread his heart's blood's scent, which made men choke!

2785

The man who'd prayed said, 'Give me that deep sigh
And take my prayer's rewards, which it can buy.'
He said, 'I'll give my sigh and take your prayer.'

The other grabbed that sigh which seemed so rare
And in a dream that very night was told:

'Water of Life now and the cure you hold.

In honour of the wise way you've selected,

2790

The congregation's prayers are all accepted.'

Conclusion of Satan's confession of his deceit to Mo'aviya

Satan then said, 'Majestic prince, now I

Must clarify the reason for my lie:

If you had missed the morning prayer today,

You would have sighed and moaned in deep dismay—

That aching neediness and lamentation

Would have earned more than prayers and meditation.

I woke you up for fear that such deep sighs

Would burn away the veil before your eyes,

So such sighs wouldn't come to your possession,

2795

So you'd not learn to sigh with desperate passion.

Envious, I did it out of jealousy;

Lying through spite, I am the enemy.'

Mo'aviya said, 'Now the truth you tell.

Deceit comes from you and you suit it well!

You are a spider: your prey is the fly;

I'm not a fly; my rank is much too high!

I'm a white falcon prized by royalty—

How can a spider weave webs to catch me?

While you still can, go out and catch some flies!

2800

Call all of them to your trap with your lies!

If you call them to honey that is pure,

They will instead find yoghurt or manure.

You woke me, but to deep sleep actually;

You showed a boat, but then tried drowning me.

You called me to good purpose on this day,

From better things to drive me far away.'

*How a burglar escaped when someone called the owner
of the house who had already almost caught him*

A burglar was seen in a house one day
 And by the owner he was chased away;
 The owner chased him for a mile or more 2805
 And quickly tired as sweat began to pour.
 When he had almost caught up with the wretch
 And could have grabbed his collar at a stretch,
 Someone inside his house screamed, 'Come and see
 These indications of calamity!
 Hurry up! Come at once! Please turn around,
 So you can see the tragic things I've found!'

The owner thought, 'Another burglar might
 Be there, and that could be a much worse plight!
 To my sweet wife and children he'll creep near— 2810
 How will it help to tie up this thief here?
 A good man's helping me now with his call;
 If I don't head back, I'll regret it all!
 Hoping for kind help from that man, he then
 Let the thief go, to head back home again.
 'Good friend, what's happening?' he then yelled out,
 'What are these screams and moaning all about?'
 'A burglar's footprints—look, they are so clear!
 That bastard burglar must have walked through here.
 Look at the footprints! You'll soon apprehend 2815
 The scoundrel, if you follow them, my friend.'
 'Is that all, idiot?' the owner said,
 'I'd almost caught him, but turned round instead:
 Because I heard you shout, I let him go;
 That you're a stupid ass I didn't know!
 What gibberish and nonsense comes from you!
 I'd found the truth—what good now is a clue?'
 He said, 'A vital clue I chose to show,
 Though the entire facts I already know.'
 'You're stupid or pretending that you care; 2820
 No, you're a thief—that's how you are aware!

I'd nearly grabbed and tied my enemy,
But you screamed, "Here's a clue!" and set him free.
You talk of signs, but I'm beyond that station:
Signposts have no use at the destination.'
If veiled from attributes, watch His creations;
God's attributes are seen from higher stations;
But in God's essence if annihilated,
His attributes then can't be contemplated:
When you are swimming in the deepest river, 2825
Why wonder then 'What is the water's colour?'
To check the colour if you should swim back,
You're swapping silk for a moth-bitten sack!
The common man's good deed is the saint's sin;*
To saints, their 'unions' are veiled states they're in:
For if a king should make his own vizier
A law-enforcer, this would be severe—
A big sin that vizier must have committed,
For not without a cause is this permitted.
However, if he'd been one from the start, 2830
He might have loved this job with all his heart.
All good viziers would feel most disappointed,
If as a law-enforcer they're appointed:
If from the threshold he has summoned you,
Then driven you away, this is a clue
That you've done something inappropriate
And ignorance has brought this twist of fate.
You might claim that this was your destiny—
Was it just luck before then? Answer me!
Ignorance has deprived you of your lot; 2835
Worthy men make their portion grow, not rot.

*The story of the hypocrites and their building of
the Mosque of Opposition*

A similar parable I offer next;
You would have read it in the Holy Text:*

The hypocrites played such a crooked game
 When to Medina first the Prophet came:
 'For the sake of Mohammad's faith,' they said,
 'We'll build a mosque!' But they sought sin instead.
 They cheated in the game that they'd selected:
 A new and separate mosque these men erected,
 With floor and dome so finely decorated, 2840
 Hoping that Muslims would be separated.
 They then approached the Prophet in petition,
 Kneeling the way that camels take position,
 And pleaded, 'Would you trouble your pure feet
 To come and see our mosque across the street,
 So, through your footsteps, this most humble place
 Might benefit—may yours be lasting grace!
 This is a mosque for dark and cloudy days,
 For poor folk suffering a needy phase,
 A strangers' shelter offering charity. 2845
 This place of service might grow rapidly,
 And our religion's rites more men might learn—
 With friends' help, bitter things to sweet can turn.
 Please grace us with your presence for one hour,
 Purify us! On us your praises shower!
 Please bless this mosque and us; we are the night
 While you're the moon; with us one hour unite,
 So, through your beauty, night will seem like day—
 You send each soul-illuminating ray!
 If only they had meant what they had said, 2850
 Their wish might then have been fulfilled instead.
 Soundest proofs on a tongue that's insincere
 Are like grass placed on ash-heaps, so keep clear!
 Observe them from a distance and then run!
 They are not fit to swallow down, my son.
 Don't let talk from the insincere tempt you,
 For it's an old, weak bridge which looks like new:
 If a fool steps on it, the bridge will break
 And his feet will be crushed by this mistake.
 Whenever a large army tastes defeat 2855
 It's due to weaklings who are too effete:

One joins with arms as if he's really brave
And men say, 'He's a comrade in the cave!'
But he will scamper if their foes attack
And his escape will break his army's back.
These issues are vast, and expand as well—
Explaining would delay what we must tell.

*The hypocrites tried to deceive the Prophet, so they might
take him to the Mosque of Opposition*

They chanted to God's Prophet spells like these;
Riding the steed of cunning, they'd beg: 'Please!
That generous Messenger whom God had sent 2860
Answered with naught but smiles and kind assent:
He thanked them generously, as they soared high
With joy on hearing his polite reply.
Like hair which floats on milk he then could see
Each single aspect of their trickery,
But spoke as if it were invisible;
Thus to such milk he screamed: 'How wonderful!
A hundred hairs of trickery were there
And yet he lowered his eyes, and would not stare!
That ocean of pure kindness made it clear: 2865
'I'm kinder to you than yourselves—don't fear!
I sit next to a fire that's devastating;
Its flames are deadly and for you they're waiting,
And just like moths you rush there, come what may—
My hands, like swatters, must swipe you away.'
The Prophet thus agreed there to be led,
But then 'Don't listen to the ghoul!' God said,
'They've plotted trickery, so you must know
The truth's the opposite of what they show:
Their aim is only to bring shame to you; 2870
Don't seek concern for your faith from their Jew!
They've built a mosque upon the edge of hell
And played the game of cheat with God as well;
The Muslims they would split up and displace—
How can such meddlers recognize God's grace?

From Syria, they want to bring that Jew*
 Whose sermons give them hope they'll challenge you.'
 The Prophet said, 'I will, but not today;
 To our next battle we are on our way.
 When I return from my next distant raid 2875
 I'll come and see this mosque which you have made.'
 Before he went, he sent them home again,
 Thus played tricks with the trickiest of men!
 On his return, the tricksters came once more
 To seek what he'd agreed to do before.
 God then said, 'Prophet, show their treachery!
 And if a war should break out, let it be!
 He said, 'Be silent, liars! Don't go on
 Or I'll reveal the truth to everyone!
 He then revealed some clues about their ruse 2880
 And they grew scared of what they had to lose.
 Their leader then returned to him, to say:
 'Allah forbid that we should act this way!
 Holding Qur'ans, each hypocrite then came;
 To trick the Prophet was their only aim.
 They took oaths as a shield for self-protection;
 Taking oaths is the crooked man's convention—
 Because to the religion he's not true,
 Each moment he will break his oath to you.
 The truthful don't need oaths; they can sense lies 2885
 Because they see the truth with their own eyes.
 Breaking a covenant is so disgraceful;
 Keeping one's word reveals that someone's faithful.

'Should I accept your oaths?' the Prophet said,
 'Or is the word of God the truth instead?'
 They took some more oaths, holding the Qur'an,
 Each one as though he were a righteous man,
 Saying, 'On the Qur'an, this oath I take:
 Building the mosque was solely for God's sake.
 No falsehood or deceit is found in there, 2890
 Just space for meditation and for prayer.'

The Prophet said, 'God's voice to me is clear,
Just like an echo sounding in each ear,
But God has sealed your ears due to your choice,
And so they'll never get to hear His voice.
God's voice comes to me as a revelation,
And it is free from all contamination.'
Moses once from a bush heard God's voice say:
'You lucky, fortunate one!' and knelt to pray;
Also, '*Lo, I am God!*' from it he heard,*
With lights accompanying every word.
Once startled by God's revelation's light,
Those false men took more oaths in utter fright.
God called oaths 'shields', and nobody will see
An enemy drop his shield willingly.
The Prophet called them 'liars' once again;
He said, '*You lied!*'* to these deceitful men.

2895

One of the Companions went away, asking himself: 'Why doesn't the Prophet throw a veil of discretion over their situation?'

One of the Prophet's followers that day
Disliked the Prophet acting in this way.
He thought, 'Such virtuous, pure, and pious men
The Prophet is embarrassing again.
To hide their faults is generosity—
The Prophet should not let the others see.'
But then he begged forgiveness with much haste,
Since faulting him will leave a man disgraced.
The hypocrites will bring bad luck to you;
If you befriend them, you'll turn ugly too.
He begged, 'You who know my deep secrets well,
Don't let me think still like an infidel!
I don't control my heart like my two eyes—
I'd burn it now in anger otherwise!'
He then lay down, so he could sleep a bit,
And dreamt these people's mosque was made of shit:
Its bricks were laid in filthy shit throughout
And from those bricks a foul black smoke blew out.

2900

2905

Smoke filled his throat and made it sore and red,
 Due to its bitter stench—he leapt from bed,
 Then fell prostrate and wept in fits at once:
 ‘It’s due to my denial and arrogance!
 In this case, treating them like foes is right; 2910
 Kindness risks stealing from my heart faith’s light.’
 Form-worshippers’ deeds if you should compare,
 You’ll see they stink like onions, layer by layer,
 Each one more empty than the one before,
 While, for good men, each new deed is worth more.
 Around their cloaks a hundred belts they’ve bound,
 The Mosque of Qoba* to raze to the ground,
 Like those who with an elephant once came,
 Whose house of worship God had set aflame:
 They tried to crush the Kaaba in return; 2915
 About what happened to them you should learn.*
 Disgraced men like this group do not have tools
 Apart from plots which trap the weakest fools.

All the Companions* then could clearly see
 That vile mosque’s nature in reality.
 If these men’s inner states I should spell out,
 All doubters would see they were pure throughout;
 The truth about their states I dare not share—
 One has to treat such men with extra care;
 They know God’s laws without blind imitation, 2920
 Gold coins without a touchstone—that’s their station!
 Qur’anic wisdom’s the believer’s stray;
 Each knows his own stray camel straight away.*

*The story about a man who was looking for his
 stray camel and asking after it*

You’ve lost a camel—now you seek it out;
 On finding it, that it’s yours you won’t doubt.
 You’ve lost the camel you are used to riding;
 It has escaped your hold and now is hiding.

The caravan is ready to move on;
They have all packed up, but your camel's gone—
With parched lips you are searching left and right; 2925
The caravan sets off, and soon it's night.
Your things have just been left there on the ground,
While in your search you have been wandering round,
Asking: 'Who's seen a camel come this way?
It fled its stable earlier today.
About my camel pass me information
And I'll give you a generous compensation.'
You seek a clue like this from everyone,
So all the scoundrels see you and poke fun,
Jesting: 'We saw a camel head that way, 2930
A reddish camel, searching for some hay.'
One asks, 'Was it crop-eared and quite perplexed?'
'Its saddle was embroidered,' claims the next.
Another asks, 'Did it have just one eye?'
The next, 'Was it sick and about to die?'
Each wretch in hope of a reward from you
Presents to you his fabricated clue.

*On becoming perplexed due to different schools of thought,
and how to find escape and deliverance*

All men try to describe the mystery
Of truth, each one of them so differently:
Philosophers describe it in one way, 2935
While theologians counter what they say;
Another one refutes them both, and he
Whose soul is blind tries to refute all three.
About the true path each informs a bit,
Such that you might think they belong to it.
They are not all correct in what they say
And neither are they totally astray.
Without the real one there would be no fake:
False gold for real gold simple men mistake.
If in this world there weren't authentic gold, 2940
How could a counterfeit of it be sold?

Without the truth, how can there be a lie?

All falsehoods on the true facts must rely.

Men buy a bent thing, thinking that it's straight:

Poison appeared like sugar, so they ate.

Were there no wheat which men prefer to eat,

None would then pass mere barley off as wheat.

Don't say all talk is wholly counterfeit!

False talk attracts since some see truth in it;

It's all mere fantasy you might insist—

2945

Without truth, fantasy would not exist:

Truth's like the Night of Power,* which makes your soul

Check each night to tell which fulfils this role—

Not all nights are the Night of Power, just one,

Neither are they all void of power, my son.

Among those who wear dervish garb today

Just one is true—find him without delay!

Where's the *discriminating, faithful sage**

To tell the base from great men in this age?

If nothing flawed or counterfeit were made,

2950

Simple men too would try their hand at trade;

Choosing the best goods would be easy then,

So who'd know competent from useless men?

Knowledge won't help if everything's flawed too—

Why bother then perfection to pursue?

The stupid man says everything is true;

A man who says all's false is foolish too.

Those who trade with the prophets gain in kind,

While those who seek material things turn blind.

In eyes which seek wealth, snakes will soon appear—

2955

Rub well your eyes so this will be made clear!

If you think profits will bring happiness,

Remember Pharaoh's and Thamud's* distress!

Keep looking at the sky above your head,

For '*Turn your gaze back there!*' God clearly said.

On testing everything until its good and bad traits become apparent

Take more than one glance at the dome of light—

Look often! *Are there any flaws in sight?**

He has told you to look up frequently

Like someone seeking flaws, not leniently;

Like when we must inspect dark earth in full, 2960

To make sure that it is approvable.

A huge amount our intellects endure

So as to tell the dregs from men who're pure.

The trials faced in winter and in fall,

The summer's warmth, spring's gift of life to all,

Winds, clouds, and lightning—all from God come here,

So that all differences can be made clear,

So that dust-coloured earth will then make known

What it contains: a ruby or mere stone?

So many things dark earth grabs stealthily 2965

From Bounty's Ocean and God's treasury.

God's viceroy, providence, says, 'Earth, admit

What you have pilfered! Every bit of it!'

That robber, earth, claims, 'Not a thing, I swear!'

The viceroy grabs and wrings it like a bear.

This viceroy may speak like a sweet, kind man,

Then later speak as harshly as one can,

So that all hidden things, through wrath and grace—

Fear and hope's flames—reveal to us their face.

Spring sends God's kindness, but, lest men forget, 2970

Autumn shows them God's terror and His threat;

The winter is the inner crucifixion,

When, hidden thief, truth is made clear from fiction.

At times the holy warrior feels expansion,

At other times pain, torment, and contraction.

Our earthly bodies try with all their might

Denying and then stealing our soul's light.

God places grief and pain, hot things and cold,
 Upon our bodies, so you must be bold!
 Poverty, hunger, handicaps, and fear 2975
 Are sent so the soul's nature is made clear.
 He has made promises and threats of terror,
 Due to the good and bad He's mixed together;
 The truth and falsehood have been muddled up,
 Like putting real and false gold in one cup.
 A mystic touchstone therefore is required,
 One who has seen trials and has been inspired,
 In order to discern all falsehoods, and
 To organize things just as they were planned.
 'Mother of Moses, give him milk!' we scream. 2980
 'Don't worry when you place him on the stream!
 All who have drunk milk at *Alast* can test,
 To find out which milk's from their mother's breast;
 If you would like your child to learn this skill,
*Suckle him,** mother of Moses, so he will
 Know how his mother's milk tastes; stop his head
 From reaching evil nurses' breasts instead!'

*Explanation of the moral of the story about that
person searching for his camel*

You've lost a camel that belongs to you
 And everyone is offering you a clue;
 You don't know where that camel chose to go, 2985
 But that their clues are false you clearly know.
 A man who hasn't lost a camel now
 Competes with you in searching anyhow;
 He'll claim, 'I've lost a camel, everyone!
 I'll give a big reward for her return.'
 To share your camel is this mimic's aim;
 Because he covets yours, he plays this game.
 From false clues he can't tell a truthful clue,
 But, for this mimic, your words serve as cue:
 If you declare, 'That clue's false!' you will see 2990
 Him do the same, but it's just mimicry.

And if a man gives clues you think are true,
 Sureness *which leaves no doubt** then comes to you:
 Such clues heal your sick soul of all its pain;
 Your health, strength, and complexion you regain,
 Your eyes light up, your feet feel quick anew,
 Body like soul, and soul like spirit too!
 ‘You were right, truthful friend!’ you then will say,
 ‘These clues are *messages as clear as day*
*In which are signs of truthful information.** 2995
 You have truth’s license and you’ve earned salvation!’
 When someone’s given such a clue, you’ll say:
 ‘It’s time for action, so please lead the way!
 Truth-teller, I will follow from behind;
 With this clue my lost camel you will find.’
 To that man who did not before possess
 That camel, but who seeks it none the less,
 More certainty will not come from this clue
 Unless it’s through a man whose search is true:
 He’ll see from your zeal that the clue is serious, 3000
 And that your screams of joy are not delirious.

That liar has no claim, but still I say
 He’d also lost a camel in a way;
 Desire for someone else’s veils his mind,
 So he’s forgotten what he’d left behind.
 The owner runs to search; he follows there;
 Through greed, the owner’s pain he starts to share:
 A liar in the truthful’s company
 Will find his lies become truths suddenly.
 Where your stray camel is when you’ve been brought, 3005
 This mimic finds his stray, which he’d not sought;
 He first recalls her when he sees her, then
 He covets no more those of other men.
 That mimic’s search first starts thus when his eyes
 Notice his own lost camel by surprise:
 He only seeks to find his camel when
 By chance he sees her; he’d not searched till then.

From that point he learns to move on alone,
 Now having opened his eyes to his own.
 The truthful man asks, 'Have you left at last?' 3010
 Is your concern about me in the past?'
 He says, 'Till now I simply would pretend;
 Desire made me your sycophantic friend,
 But now I sympathize deep in my heart,
 Though, through this search, we have been led apart.
 I stole descriptions of her straight from you;
 My soul was stunned, though, when mine came to view.
 I wasn't seeking her, if truth be told—
 Copper has now been overwhelmed by gold:
 My evil deeds were righteous deeds somehow— 3015
 Folly has left and seriousness rules now!
 My sins became the means to reach the Lord—
 Don't criticize them any more, applaud!
 Sincerity made you a seeker, while
 My search led me to it, and so I smile:
 Your search was due to your sincerity;
 Sincerity, through seeking, came to me!
 I sowed my fortune's seed in fertile soil,
 Although I'd thought it would be fruitless toil.
 It wasn't unpaid work to my surprise: 3020
 I sowed one seed and saw a hundred rise.
 A thief had sneaked into a house at night—
 He saw it was his own house in the light.'

Be warm, cold one, so more heat reaches you;
 Accept the rough, so smoothness finds you too!
 There was one camel in reality;
 Words can't contain the depths of meaning's sea:
 Expression can't reach meaning's depth; instead
 'His tongue will falter,' our great Prophet said.
 Speech is just like an astrolabe, my friend— 3025
 The mystic sky how can it comprehend?
 That sky next to which heaven seems so small,
 Next to whose sun your sun's a tiny ball.

*Explanation of how in every soul there is
the Mosque of Opposition*

When it was clear this mosque was just a ruse,
A wicked trap of lies set by the Jews,
The Prophet ordered that it be knocked down
And serve as rubbish heap for all the town.
The owner, like the mosque he had erected,
Was false: this bait he'd carefully selected.
The bait which draws the fish and makes it bite 3030
Is not the kind gift it seems at first sight.
The Mosque of Qoba was inanimate—
To stand near it that mosque was still unfit.*
Inanimates before had not earned shame
Like this—the Prophet set that mosque aflame.

Lofty things, such as human essences
Among them too possess such differences,
For one man's life is never like another's
Nor will his own death be just like his brother's,
Nor will the graves where they will finally lie; 3035
On high, such differences will multiply.
Check your work with a touchstone, to make sure
You won't build mosques like theirs, which was impure!
Though you've mocked builders of that mosque with glee,
You're just like them if you look carefully!

*Story about the Indian who fought with a friend
about something and was not aware that he too was
afflicted by it*

Four Indian friends went to a mosque one day,
To worship at the proper time to pray;
They started by declaring their intention,
And humbly followed each approved convention.*

When the muezzin entered in the hall, 3040
 While praying one asked, 'Did you make the call?'*
 These words escaped his lips; another there
 Said, 'Brother, you have nullified your prayer!'
 The third one said then to the second one:
 'Why bother him? Look at what you have done!'
 The fourth one said, 'God has protected me
 From falling in the same pit as those three!'
 The prayers of all four men were spoilt this way;*
 These four fault-finders thus went more astray.
 Blessed are those who their own flaws can see, 3045
 And will accept responsibility.
 Half of each human is by nature flawed,
 The other half, though, is linked to the Lord.
 Since you have ten wounds on your head and need
 To treat them, so the pain might then recede,
 To find faults with yourself is your best cure—
 '*Have pity!*'* needs humility that's pure.
 Even if you don't have the same flawed trait,
 It may come to you at a later date.
 Since you've not heard from God His '*Don't you fear!*'* 3050
 You can't assume that you're in safety here.
 Satan for years could boast much-envied fame,
 But was disgraced—now look at his deep shame!
 Once in the world he had a lofty station,
 But now he's cursed—witness his degradation!
 Don't seek fame till you have security.
 Wash fear from your face, then let others see.
 Until your own beard grows, good man, don't dare
 To mock one whose chin lacks a single hair!
 The devil faced a trial, and then he fell, 3055
 To serve as your own special warning-bell—
 Don't fall in and thus warn that beast instead!
 Poison he drank—God's sugar you'll be fed.

The Ghuzz Turks strove to kill one man,
so another might be frightened by this*

One day blood-spilling Ghuzz Turk warriors came

Upon a village, plunder their sole aim.

They found two local men along the way

And tried to kill one of them straight away;

They bound his hands to kill him, but he said:

‘Great noble men, by whom vast tribes are led,

Before you murder me please tell me why

3060

You thirst for my cheap blood—why must I die?

What is the point of killing one like me?

I’m poor, and naked too, as all can see.’

One said, ‘Your friend we aim to terrify

So much he’ll tell us where the treasures lie.’

‘But he’s much poorer!’ then this man implored.

‘He’s just pretending he knows where it’s stored!

We’re both the same in your imagination,

In guesswork’s dubious and rough calculation,

So kill him first, not me, as I’m not bold,

3065

And I will show you where to find the gold.’

Witness God’s kindness to us, my good friend,

That we’ve come later, closer to the end:

Our cycle’s better than those of the past—

The Prophet said: ‘*The best ones are the last.*’

The sorry fates of Noah’s and Hud’s* nations

Reveal His mercy to our generations:

He killed them, wishing we’d be fearful men;

If he had done the opposite, what then!

*Explaining the state of the self-conceited and
those ungrateful for the blessing of the existence
of prophets and saints*

When good men warn of major faults and sin

3070

And stony hearts and blackened souls within,

And taking very lightly God's command,
 And not expressing fear of what He's planned,
 And being weak like women who feel lust,
 And loving this base world made of mere dust,
 And fleeing from our counsellors' advice
 (Avoiding meeting them at any price),
 And straying from our own hearts and from gnostics,
 And being sly and false to noble mystics,
 You call them beggars so disdainfully, 3075
 And jealously think them the enemy.
 You'll call each 'beggar' if he should receive
 Your gift; if not 'He just wants to deceive!'
 Should he approach, you'll claim, 'He's covetous!'
 If not, 'His arrogance is nauseous!'
 Or, like a hypocrite, you'll try the plea:
 'My time's spent working for my family;
 I don't have time to even scratch my head
 Let alone think about my faith instead.
 Remember me in your deep states, my friend, 3080
 So I'll become a great saint in the end.'
 Your type don't ever speak through inner pain,
 But mumble sounds then fall asleep again.
 You'll claim, 'I'm poor; I've no alternative—
 I must work hard for lawful means to live.'
 Your blood's the only lawful thing I see;
 You're now as far astray as one can be,
 Forsaking God but holding on to bread,
 Abandoning faith to follow fools instead.
 You feel that you can't ever live without 3085
 This world, but not *the Lord who spread it out.**
 You cling to comforts, niceties you hoard,
 But how can you go on without the Lord?
 You can't bear life without created things,
 Yet you would live without the King of Kings.
 Abraham left the cave and screamed, elated:
 'This one's my lord!* Its form, though, who created?'
 I'll look through both the worlds until I find
 The one by whom all objects were designed;

If I don't see God's attributes, my food
Will stick inside my throat and spoil my mood:
How can I swallow while I can't observe
The rose-garden of God, the lord I serve?
Save in the hope for God, how can one drink
Unless one is a beast who cannot think?
They are *like cattle, only more astray*:*
They're devious, smelly, and will not obey.
Their tricks rebound on their own souls, my friend,
And what remains of their lives will soon end.
Like senile men, their brains become too slow,
And when their lives end, nothing's left to show.
Each one will claim, 'I'm thinking of that day,'
But that's a tale his ego loves to say.
'*He is forgiving*,'* each of them will cry,
But that's their ego's way to cheat and lie;
Through lack of food you grieve as if half-dead—
If He's forgiving, why do you feel dread?

*An old man complains to a physician of
his ailments and the physician answers him*

An old man told his doctor, 'I'm in pain:
I'm suffering due to problems with my brain!
'Old age is where the cause of this pain lies.'
He then said, 'There are dark spots on my eyes!'
The doctor answered, 'That's old age as well.'
And next he said, 'My back now hurts like hell!'
'Old age has caused that too, I must conclude.'
'I also can't digest at all my food.'
'Weak stomachs come with old age too, my friend.'
'Breathing is hard for me—when will it end?'
'Shortness of breath is common as are wheezes;
Old age will bring a myriad of diseases.'
'Can you say nothing more?' the old man said,
'On medicine is this all that you've read?'

Does this mean that your knowledge is so poor
 You don't know for each pain God's made a cure?
 You are a stupid man of little worth;
 You're base—that's why you're trapped upon this earth.'
 And so the doctor said, 'Old man, this rage
 And temper is as well due to old age.
 Your body parts are weak; you'll now begin
 To witness that your patience has grown thin.'
 Old men can't tolerate two words without 3110
 A screamed retort: they drink then spew it out,
 Except wise elders who're intoxicated
 With God—the *blissful life** they've demonstrated.
 Each one just looks old, but is young inside—
 Like this why do the saints and prophets hide?
 What are they if by most they can't be seen?
 Why do they turn base men through envy green?
 If they can't see God's saints with certainty,
 Why do their foes hatch plots with enmity?
 And if unsure of Judgment Day's rewards, 3115
 Why do they throw themselves against their swords?
 One smiles at you—don't look back with a grin!
 Great resurrections he contains within:
 Heaven and hell are parts of this man, who
 Transcends whatever is conceived by you.
 Whatever you conceive dies in the end,
 For only God can't be conceived, my friend.
 Why, at the saint's door, are some puffed with pride?
 Don't they know who it is that lives inside?
 The mosques are what the stupid venerate, 3120
 While they attack the mystics with sick hate—
 Donkeys, your mosques are only transient things!
 The real mosques are the hearts of mystic kings;
 The saint's heart is the greatest mosque around
 Because that is the place where God is found.*
 When a saint was attacked, and only then,
 Did God first choose to put to shame some men:
 They fought the prophets,* who looked just the same
 To them; they only saw their human frame.

If you have your forefathers' bad traits too, 3125
Are you not scared the same fate waits for you?
Those traits can be seen in you easily,
For you are one of them—where will you flee?

*The story of Johi * and the child who lamented
at his father's funeral*

Before his father's coffin, once a child
Would weep and beat his head like someone wild.
'Where are they taking you?' the child would say,
'That they are lowering you down this way?
Is it a narrow house of pain down there
Without a carpet, like a house that's bare,
No lamp at night and no meals there by day, 3130
Where even whiffs of food won't waft your way,
No roof, nor doors that open properly,
No neighbour who might offer sanctuary?
Your eyes which were admired by all around
Surely to such a bleak, dark place aren't bound,
A cramped and gloomy place that's unprotected,
In which no sign of life can be detected!
He listed features of this awful place,
Wept tears of blood which trickled down his face.
To his own father Johi turned to say, 3135
'They're taking that man to our house today.'
His father scoffed, 'Don't be an idiot!
He said, 'But all the signs are accurate:
He has described each one of them in turn
And they match our own house, if you discern:
No rug, nor lamp, nor food is found inside,
Nor roof, nor doors through which to reach outside!'

The vile display a hundred signs like these
But, though they're clear to us, none of them sees.

The heart's house starved of radiance totally 3140
 Lacks rays from the sun of divinity;
 Like a denier's soul—a cramped, dark waste—
 Of love's king it has never had a taste;
 Neither in that heart does the sunlight fall,
 Nor does it feel expansion's joy at all.
 The grave is better than this wretched heart—
 Ascend from your own heart's grave and depart!
 You who're alive and seem so animated
 Must feel in this cramped tomb so suffocated!
 The Joseph of your age, the sun of grace, 3145
 Escape this well and gaol, then show your face! *
 You're Jonah, who inside a whale spent days,
 But managed to escape it through God's praise;
 The belly of the whale would otherwise
 Have been his cell till that day *all must rise**—
 Through praising God, Jonah escaped at last;
 Praise is a sign which points back to *Alast*.
 If you've forgotten now the inner praise,
 Listen to mystic fish and learn their ways.
 Those who see God become divine, my friend; 3150
 Those who swim seas become fish in the end.
 The body is a whale, the world an ocean;
 Spirit is Jonah, blocked from light and motion;
 If it starts praising God, it then breaks free,
 If not then it's consumed there instantly.
 The ocean has fish of a mystic kind,
 But you can't see them, fool, because you're blind.
 Those fish for fun now bounce themselves off you—
 Open your eyes to verify it's true!
 Though your eyes cannot see them, my dear friend, 3155
 Your ears will hear God's praises which they send.

To practise patience is the best of ways—
 Be patient, for that's the best form of praise!
 No praise is to a similar degree—
 Be patient! *For relief it is the key.*

Patience is heaven's bridge which must cross hell;*
 Beauties wait there, their ugly slaves as well—
If you flee from her slave, you'll be denied
 Her presence, for that slave won't leave her side.
Patience is still unknown to your weak heart, 3160
 Since from a beauty you're not kept apart.
Real men seek glory through love's inner fights;
 The penis is what's loved by sodomites:
They've left faith due to penis adoration;
 Their thoughts have caused their shameful degradation!
Don't fear them even if they fly above,
 For all they've gained is vile, debasing love.
Each leads his horse down a most steep descent,
 Although he claims his aim is an ascent.
Why fear the banners beggars wave ahead? 3165
 Those banners are just means of gaining bread.

*A child is frightened by a huge man, who says,
 'Don't be scared, child, for I am not a man'*

A huge man found a child alone one night.
 What did he want? The child grew pale with fright.
'Now rest assured, my handsome boy,' he said,
 'That you will mount on top of me instead.
View me as impotent, though I am strong;
 Ride me as if a camel—come along!
In form a man, but twisted actually,
 Outwardly human, devilish inwardly.
Fat like the Aad,* he seemed a drum in form 3170
 On which the wind strikes branches in a storm.
A fox released its prey, and then turned back,
 Attracted by a drum-like empty sack.
On finding its 'drum' empty, it complained:
 'A pig is better than what has remained!'
Foxes fear drum beats, which make them act meek—
 The wise beat their drums hard to say '*Don't speak!*'

*The story about an archer's fear of a horseman
who was riding in the forest*

An armed and frightening horseman rode ahead
 Into a forest on a thoroughbred.
 An archer standing there saw him and drew 3175
 His bow in fear, not knowing what to do.
 He aimed to shoot; the rider shouted out:
 'I'm weak—don't let my huge frame make you doubt!
 Please listen! Don't just judge me by my size!
 I'm weaker than a crone who sits and cries.'
 The archer said, 'Please pass; your words ring true.
 If you'd not spoken I'd have shot at you.'
 Weapons kill those who hold them frequently,
 When they lack the required maturity:
 If you hold Rostam's weapons and feel fear, 3180
 Not man enough, your soul will disappear.
 So make your soul a shield and drop your sword—
 The headless will gain new heads from the Lord.
 Your weapons are your trickery and plots—
 They've wounded your own soul by taking shots.
 Since from your tricks you've gained naught in the end,
 Abandon them, so God good luck might send!
 Since from men's arts you've seen no actual gain,
 Seek *Bounty's Lord* and from such arts abstain!
 Men's sciences are not the fortunate kind, 3185
 So be a dunce and leave bad luck behind;
 Then, like the angels, say, '*God, we know naught*
Except the knowledge which You've kindly taught.'*

*The story about the Bedouin who put sand in a sack
and was criticized for this by a philosopher*

A Bedouin made his poor camel strain
 By loading two big sacks—one full of grain.

He sat on them when he began to ride;
A scholar questioned him, one puffed with pride.
This scholar started thus a conversation,
Which was an eloquent interrogation:
He asked, 'What do those two big sacks contain?' 3190
Tell me with what they're filled and what you'll gain!
He said, 'One of those sacks is filled with wheat,
The other sand not fit for men to eat.'
'Why bring a sack of sand with you today?'
'The other might feel lonely on the way.'
'Pour half the wheat which fills that sack instead
Into the other sack!' the scholar said,
'Lighten your camel's load, while you still can.'
The Bedouin screamed, 'Bravo, learned man!
You have a subtle mind, your judgement's sound—' 3195
Naked and tired why must you walk around?'
He pitied the poor scholar, so his plan
Was to seat on his camel this wise man.
He asked him next, 'Well-spoken sage, please share
With me a bit about your own affair;
With such intelligence and talent too,
A minister or king—which one are you?'
'I'm just an ordinary man, my friend—
Look at the way I dress and comprehend!'
'How many camels then do you possess?' 3200
'None. Please don't ask what causes me distress!'
'What kind of goods do you sell at your store?'
'I have no store—don't press me any more!'
'Well, please inform me how much gold you own,
Peerless sage, whose good counsel is well known;
You can transform this world with alchemy,
And you boast precious and rare sophistry.'
He answered, 'All the wealth that I possess
Can't buy food for tonight—it is much less!
Barefoot and naked I must run around, 3205
Heading wherever free food can be found.
From all this art and wisdom all I gain
Is headaches and vain fancies in my brain!'

The Bedouin then said, 'Get far away,
 So that your bad luck won't descend my way!
 Take your ill-fortuned wisdom far from me!
 It brings bad luck to our community.
 You go that way, I'll go this way instead;
 Or I'll walk backwards if you walk ahead.
 Mere sacks of wheat and sand are in my eyes 3210
 Worth more than being uselessly so wise!
 My idiocy's a blessing I've no doubt,
 Because my heart's content, my soul devout.
 If you want to reduce your misery,
 Rid yourself of your wisdom—be like me!
 He meant the wisdom in one's outward nature,
 Not that sort which is light from the Creator;
 With worldly wisdom doubts will multiply,
 While mystic wisdom makes your soul soar high.
 These days the vile, depraved men who are clever 3215
 Claim higher ranks than any mystic ever.
 Students of trickery themselves have burnt;
 Pretence and plotting is all they have learnt.
 Patience, self-sacrifice, and chivalry,
 Which are real gains, they've thrown out heedlessly.
 Real thought is that which opens paths inside;
 The path is that on which the true kings ride.
 The proper king is king in his own right,
 Not through his treasures or his army's might,
 And so he always will hold this position, 3220
 Just like the glory of Mohammad's mission.

The miracles of Ebrahim-e Adham on the ocean's shore*

About Ebrahim-e Adham they say
 That he stopped on the ocean's shore one day,
 And sewed his cloak while resting briefly there.
 A prince arrived and soon began to stare;
 As a disciple of this shaikh, he knew
 Just who he was, and bowed as he should do.

He was astonished at the garb he wore,
For he'd transformed from what he was before:
A comfortable life of prosperity 3225
He'd given up to live in poverty.
He thought, 'He has renounced enormous riches.
Now, like a beggar, woollen cloaks he stitches!'
The shaikh could read this person's thoughts with ease—
Hearts are the jungles which this lion sees:
He enters in their hearts like hope and fear;
The secrets of the world to him are clear,
So guard your hearts, you useless slaves of greed,
When near the masters of your hearts—take heed!
For worldly men, respect is shown outside, 3230
Since God the unseen realm from them will hide;
For mystics though, respect's shown inwardly,
Because their hearts see every mystery—
You do the opposite: for a position
You'll kneel before the blind men in petition!
You don't behave near mystics as you should,
And so in fires of lust you'll burn like wood;
Since you lack true perception of God's light,
You put on make-up for men lacking sight;
And for the mystics you rub on your face 3235
Manure, then pose imagining you've grace!

The shaikh then tossed a needle in the sea
And called for its return immediately.
Myriads of divine fish came to sight,
Gold needles in their lips, which were pressed tight—
They raised their heads thus from God's ocean and
Said, 'Take God's needles, shaikh, with your pure hand!'
He turned his face toward the prince and said,
'The heart's wealth or the wretched kind instead?'
This is the outer sign, and nothing more— 3240
Wait till you see within what lies in store!
Just one branch from the garden men bring down—
They can't bring the whole garden to your town;

When heaven's just one leaf of it—heed well,
That it's the kernel while this is the shell.

If you're not rushing to the garden, friend,
Seek more scent to make your congestion end,
And then the scent will give your soul delight,
Attracting you like light which gives eyes sight.

Jacob's son Joseph, due to that scent's trace, 3245
Instructed, '*Throw it on my father's face!*'*

The Prophet often said for that scent's sake:
'*In ritual prayer the most delight I take!*'*

Our senses are connected, as we've shown,
Since from the same root each of them has grown;
Strengthen one and it will make strong the others—
Each one becomes the Saki for its brothers.

Seeing makes love grow and intensify,
And love gives truthful vision to each eye;
Such true perception wakes your other senses 3250
To deeper and direct experiences.

*How the mystic's illumination begins with the light which
sees the hidden world*

When from its bonds one sense should be set free,
The rest transform as well accordingly.

If one sense sees what is invisible,
Then for all senses that's perceptible:

When one sheep jumps across the stream, each one
Will copy then what that first sheep has done.

Drive on your senses' sheep, so there they'll graze:
'*He brings forth pastures,*'* God's divine book says,

Where they can savour flowers, herbs, and trees, 3255
And find the rosebud of realities.

Each sense will be a prophet for the others,
So all of them reach paradise like brothers.

Your senses of the secrets they'll inform
Without tongues, without meaning, without form,
For meaning's open to interpretations,
And idle whims spring from loose estimations;
But inner truths which are made manifest
Can't be interpreted, unlike the rest.
When each sense is the slave of that first sense 3260
The heavens too will show obedience:
If there's an argument about the shell,
The kernel's owner owns that shell as well;
And if a quarrel starts about some straw,
Find out who owned the seeds—this is the law!
The sky's the shell, the spirit's light the kernel,
One manifest, one hidden and eternal.
Bodies are seen; spirits are what they hide:
Bodies are sleeves; spirits the arms inside.
Intellect is more hidden than that spirit 3265
Which gives us life, for senses can't perceive it:
You know a man's alive if he should move,
But that he has a brain you still can't prove
Until he starts to move deliberately,
And changes movements thus with alchemy:
Through the appropriate manner his hands move
Intellect's presence you can easily prove.
But revelation's spirit's more concealed—
It's from beyond and seldom is revealed:
The Prophet's intellect was clear to view, 3270
His spirit, though, could be perceived by few.*
The spirit has clear movements of its own,
But through the intellect they can't be known;
Sometimes it thinks it mad, sometimes undone,
Since it is veiled until they join as one:
Like Kheizr's each divinely guided action—
Moses's brain grew troubled in reaction;
His actions seemed so inappropriate—
To understand them Moses was unfit.
Unseen truths Moses couldn't comprehend, 3275
So what can a mere mouse perceive, my friend?*

Knowledge that's rote-learnt is what's usually sold,
 Its source of joy a buyer who brings gold.
 Experiential knowledge God will buy;
 His market's profit is forever high.
 Lips sealed, drunk on the rapid rate of business,
 Since *God has bought them*,* shoppers here are countless.
 Angels will buy what Adam has to teach,
 But for the demons this is out of reach.
 Adam, *to whom We taught the names*,* please share 3280
 With us God's secrets, every detail there!
 A man who suffers from shortsightedness
 Will be unstable and lack steadfastness;
 Since this man lives on earth I call him 'mouse';
 In soil is where you find the mouse's house;
 He knows some paths, but they're all underground;
 He's penetrated mud-piles all around.
 The mouse-soul is a nibbler ruled by greed;
 Its brain is in proportion to its need,
 Since God does not give anything for free 3285
 Without there being a necessity.
 If this world gave us no real benefit
 The Lord then wouldn't have created it;
 If shaky earth did not need to keep still,
 It wouldn't be pinned down by every hill;
 If there were really no need for the skies,
 He wouldn't have displayed them to our eyes;
 The sun, the moon, and stars that sparkle too—
 Except through need, how were they brought to view?
 Thus, need is the lasso which you must throw; 3290
 According to your needs He will bestow:
 Increase your neediness now rapidly—
 His sea will surge with generosity.
 Beggars and handicapped men fill the street
 To show their neediness to those they meet:
 Their blindness, their paralysis and pain
 They show, so they might from men's kindness gain.
 Does anyone say, 'People, please feed me
 Because I have food, wealth, and property?'

God hasn't given eyes to moles, since they 3295
Don't need them to trap food in their own way;
They can survive without sight, but not blood:
They don't need eyes to live in dark, damp mud.
They won't come out, unless they start to long
For God to free them, cleanse them of all wrong,
So they might gain wings, each fly like a dove
Or angel, circling in the sky above;
Then in thanksgiving's rosebush constantly
They'd sing like nightingales in ecstasy:
'You freed us from all ugliness and vice, 3300
And hellfire You transformed to paradise;
To lumps of fat called "eyeballs" You give sight,
And hearing to mere bones— You have such might!'

The spirit and the body's link's the same
As that between our knowledge and its name:
Names are nests, knowledge birds that live therein;
Bodies are ditches, spirits streams within.
The streams flow, though they seem so motionless;
The waves pass by, though one would never guess.
If you, in truth, can't see the water flow, 3305
What do the passing twigs on it then show?
Your twigs are forms which in your mind you see;
These virgin forms arrive continually;
They're carried on the flowing stream of thought;
Some of them are delightful, some are not.
The husks on flowing water all have been
Brought from the garden of the Deep Unseen—
Seek out the kernels; it's not a vain dream,
Since from the Garden to us flows this stream.
If you can't see the Water of Life flow, 3310
Look at the stream—watch straws slide to and fro!
When water flows in greater quantity,
The husks of forms too move more rapidly;
And when the stream's flow is extremely fast,
The mystic's conscience is stress-free at last,

For when its flow is rapid, full, and strong,
Then nothing else but water flows along.

A stranger reviles a shaikh and the shaikh's disciple answers him

A man pinned on a Sufi shaikh much blame:
‘He’s wicked and depraved, and he lacks shame!
He drinks wine; he’s a fraud—he’s so astray! 3315
How can he lead disciples on the way?’
That shaikh’s disciple said, ‘Observe respect!
It’s serious such great masters to suspect!
For someone like him with such sanctity,
A deluge can’t reduce his purity.
Don’t make against such saints false accusations!
Turn over a new leaf—stop fabrications!
They’re false, but even if your words were true,
What harm to a huge sea can one corpse do?
He’s more than *the two jarfuls and small pool** 3320
That one small drop could ruin him, you fool!’
Abraham’s fire was not reduced one bit—
So warn the Nimrods: ‘Be afraid of it!’
The self is Nimrod; spirit is God’s Friend:.*
The self needs signs; spirits can view the end.
Signposts serve those still travelling, since they
Inside the desert often lose their way.
The eyes of those who’ve reached the destination
Don’t care for signposts to another station;
If such a man refers to signs, it’s so 3325
The scholars too can have a chance to know:
A father for his child makes baby sounds,
Even if his own knowledge knows no bounds;
The teacher may have great ability,
But still she’ll start her class with ABC.
To teach a toddler who can hardly stand
One must use words that he can understand;
You must use the same words as children do,
So they can learn new knowledge then from you—

We are like children lagging far behind; 3330
While teaching us, shaikhs keep this fact in mind.

The shaikh's disciple carried on this way,
Regarding him so dangerously astray:
'Don't slash now at yourself with a sharp sword!
Don't start a fight now with this wondrous lord!
A pool next to an ocean in an instant
Removes itself, becoming non-existent.
He is an ocean which is limitless—
Your corpse can't make its value any less.
There are constraints to infidelity— 3335
His light has no constraint or boundary.
All transient things are worthless entities:
"All but God's face must perish,"* He decrees.
Near him no faith nor unbelief can dwell,
Since He's the kernel, while they are the shell.
We cover up his face like veils outside;
The lamp beneath a bowl we temporals hide.
Your physical head veils another head;
An infidel veils one divinely led.
Infidels doubt the shaikh's fidelity; 3340
Corpses can't see the shaikh's vitality.
In life's test, knowledge is the thing that counts:
If you have more, your life to more amounts.
Animal souls to our souls are inferior,
Because in knowledge ours are far superior;
But angels' souls are higher than ours, friend,
Because the physical realm they transcend;
But higher still are souls of mystic greats—
Cease the bewilderment this fact creates!
At Adam's feet who was then the prostrator?* 3345
His soul was therefore obviously the greater:
For a superior being to prostrate
To those worth less is inappropriate—
The Lord's kind justice, which we count upon,
Won't let our rose bow down before a thorn.

When the pure soul grows, passing every limit,
 The souls of other things must all obey it;
 Birds, fish, and every other animal,
 And even men—it's incomparable!
 The fish make needles for his sufi cloak;
 Threads follow needles just like trails of smoke: 3350

Remainder of the story about Ebrahim Ebn-e Adham on the shore

Once the prince saw the shaikh's command fulfilled,
 He felt ecstatic and extremely thrilled:
 'Mere fish of mystic masters are aware—
 We're cursed if we're unable to reach there!
 The fish can recognize, while we're unsure;
 Though we're the ones with wealth, we're much more poor!'
 After prostrating, he felt love's deep pain;
 Through yearning for *the gates*,* he went insane.

Disgraced wretch, what is your concern and aim? 3355
 Through envy whom do you now fight and blame?
 You're playing with the lion's tail—stand back!
 The angels why do you wish to attack?
 Why speak ill of pure goodness? You have lied;
 You even say humility is pride.
 What's evil like then? Cheap, deficient copper.
 And shaikhs? The alchemy which lasts forever.
 Copper which won't respond to alchemy
 Can't harm it with its own deficiency.
 What's evil like then? Rebels filled with fire. 3360
 Who is the shaikh? The sea which won't expire.
 Fire always fears the water, but why should
 Water fear being burnt like planks of wood?
 You're picking faults with the moon's radiant face—
 In paradise you seek thorns, vile disgrace!
 Thorn-picker, if you go to heaven too,
 You won't find any thorn apart from you.

You're covering the sun with mud, buffoon!
You want to find chinks in a bright, full moon!
How can a sun which shines so brilliantly 3365
Be hidden for a bat's sake? Answer me!
Dislike by masters will make things defective;
Secrets are kept when masters feel protective.
If you are far, through service cut the distance!
Be fast and be efficient in repentance,
So that you might be sent from them a breeze!
Why block His mercy's flow through jealousies?
If you're far from them, wag your tail and sway!
*Wherever you are, turn your face His way.**
When an ass falls in mud, then you will see 3370
It try to get up, struggling constantly—
It knows the mud is not appropriate,
That it is not the proper home for it.
Are you less than an ass? Has your heart blood?
Why won't you jump away now from the mud?
In mud you deem it worthy now to stay,
As you don't want to pull your heart away:
'Since I'm compelled, it is allowed for me—
God wouldn't punish helpless men, would he?'
He's punished you already, but you're blind, 3375
More hoodwinked than a blind hyena's mind:
The hunters shout, 'Hyenas aren't inside
This cave; none hide in there—let's search outside!'
They say this just to trap one and creep near,
And that hyena thinks, 'I'm safe in here.
If these foes know my hiding-place, then why
Would they shout, "Where is it?" at passers-by?'

*Someone claims, 'God will not punish me for sin,'
and Sho'ayb* answers him*

In the time of Sho'ayb, a man once claimed:
'God sees my faults, for which I should be blamed;
He's seen so many sins of mine, yet He, 3380
Out of sheer kindness, will not punish me!'

God whispered in Sho'ayb's ear from on high
 So clearly that this would be His reply:
 'You have just said, "I've sinned so many times;
 God has not punished me though for my crimes" —
 The truth's the opposite of what you say,
 You who have left the path and gone astray:
 Often I punish you, but you don't know,
 And you are trapped in chains from head to toe!
 Black pot, the layers of rust on you now cover 3385
 And spoil your inner face, as you'll discover:
 Rust has spread to your heart like a disease,
 Making it blind to lofty mysteries.
 If we should put a clean pot in your place,
 Heat from the flames would leave an obvious trace,
 Because through opposites all things are known:
 On something white, black markings will be shown.
 But once the pot's turned black, the fire's effect
 No eyes will still be able to detect.
 And if the blacksmith is of the black race, 3390
 The smoke will match the colour of his face;
 But if the blacksmith is a pale-faced Greek,
 The smoke will leave black patches on his cheek,
 So he will quickly learn the price of sin,
 And then to beg forgiveness he'll begin.
 If you persist with sins of degradation,
 You'll throw dust in the eye of contemplation —
 You won't repent at all; your heart will swell
 With love for sins, just like an infidel,
 And so you won't perform remorseful prayers; 3395
 Rust will form on your mirror many layers;
 Rust will erode its iron by its presence,
 Reducing thus the value of your essence.
 If you write on some paper which is white,
 That writing can be read then at first sight;
 If you write on what others wrote before,
 It cannot be deciphered any more,
 For black on top of black creates a mess
 Which is illegible and meaningless.

And if to write a third time you turn back,
You'll make it, like an evil soul, pitch black.
Refuge in God apart, what else have we?
Despair is copper, vision alchemy.
Lay down despair before Him, so you might
Escape this deadly pain, and end your plight!

3400

Sho'ayb told him these points, which caused the start
Of a rose blooming deep within his heart.
That sinner's soul thus heard true revelation,
And yet he said, 'I've seen no confirmation.'
Sho'ayb told God, 'This wretch will not repent!
He wants some proof of his own punishment.'
God answered, 'I'm the Veiler; I won't show
The secrets to him; I'll give one clue though:
One sign that he receives my punishments
Is that he fasts and prays like penitents,
And worships and gives alms, but it's a waste—
Of mystic states he's never had a taste.
He does good deeds and acts of piety,
But hasn't tasted true proximity;
His deeds are empty acts, as though he's lied,
A walnut with no kernel kept inside.
Spiritual savour is what makes fruit grow;
There must be kernels in the seeds you sow—
Can kernel-less seeds still grow into trees?
Soulless forms just exist in fantasies.'

3405

3410

Remainder of the story about the stranger berating the shaikh

He spoke about the shaikh as if insane;
Distorted vision damages one's brain.
He said, 'I met him at a gathering;
He's neither pious nor a mystic king,
And, if you doubt this, come along with me
To witness your own shaikh's depravity!'

3415

He led him to a window: 'That's him drinking—
 Watch his depravity! What were you thinking?
 A hypocrite: depraved once out of sight;
 A saint by day, a Bu Lahab by night!
 "God's faithful servant" men call him by day;
 At night he fills his glass and drinks away!
 They saw his master with a glass of wine,
 So the disciple asked, 'Dear shaikh of mine,
 Did you not say that Satan urinates 3420
 In every glass of wine, and celebrates?'
 He said, 'My cup's so full in my heart's core,
 So no one can now pour in any more—
 Look here! Is there room for another drop?
 Deluded men misread acts; you must stop!'

He didn't mean the wine that's visible;
 To see unseen things this shaikh's capable.
 The glass is the shaikh's being, fool, beware!
 The devil can't direct his urine there.
 He is pure light, with God's light he's filled up; 3425
 Becoming light has smashed his body's cup!
 If sunlight on a piece of shit is seen,
 It stays the same and isn't made unclean.
 'There's neither glass nor wine,' the shaikh then said;
 'If you want to inspect me, go ahead!'

He found some honey of a special kind,
 And realized his doubts had made him blind!
 The shaikh told the disciple suddenly:
 'Go to the tavern to buy wine for me,
 For I'm in pain, and thus compelled to drink; 3430
 I am so thirsty I have reached the brink.'
 When helpless, even carcasses are clean;*
 Curse all deniers, as they're low and mean!
 He went to the wine store immediately
 And sampled wine for him obediently,
 But found no wine on which to spend his money—
 All of the jugs in there were filled with honey!
 He said, 'Wine-tiplers, what has come to pass?
 I can't find wine here to fill up one glass!'

The tipplers sought the shaikh then hurriedly, 3435
Beating their heads and weeping bitterly:
‘Great shaikh, you visited our tavern once—
To honey our wine changed in consequence.
You changed our wine from its unlawful state,
So change our hearts now—grant us a clean slate!’
Even if only blood’s available,
What God’s slave drinks will be permissible.

Aisha complains to the Prophet, ‘Why do you pray
anywhere and without a prayer rug?’*

Aisha told off Mohammad critically:
‘Prophet, both privately and openly,
Wherever you are, you perform the prayer, 3440
Even though dirty people can step there,
And grubby little kids might urinate,
If they are playing there and cannot wait.’
‘For the sake of great men,’ the Prophet said,
‘God makes unclean things pure and clean instead—
Each spot I place my head He’ll purify,
From that bare floor to far beyond the sky!’
Stop envying the mystic kings, beware,
Or Satan’s wretched fate will be your share!
Poison will turn to honey for those few; 3445
Honey will turn to poison though for you.
The true man and his actions change this way—
He’s now all grace; his fire is a light ray.
Each of *those birds** was a recipient
Of God’s strength, so they’d kill that elephant;
Small birds destroyed an army, so you’d know
They gained their strength from God against their foe.
About those birds, if you have any doubt,
Find the tale in the Book* and read it out!
If you try to compete with God’s elite, 3450
I warn you that you’re bound to taste defeat!

*How a mouse pulled the rope of the camel's bridle
and became conceited*

A mouse got tied up in a camel's lead,
 Which meant it travelled with it at great speed,
 And since the camel didn't seem to mind,
 It dreamt, 'I'm a mouse of a special kind!
 The camel sensed what that mouse dreamt about,
 And said, 'Amuse yourself! I'll sort you out!
 After a while, the pair reached a deep river,
 The sight of which made wolves and lions shiver.
 The terrified mouse stood completely still. 3455
 The camel asked, 'Companion from the hill,
 Why have you stopped? Why are you at a loss?
 Step forward like a brave man—walk across!
 Great mouse, my guide and leader, don't stop here
 And give up. There is nothing now to fear.'
 'The water is too deep,' the mouse complained,
 'The fear of drowning leaves my frail heart drained!
 'Let me see just how deep,' the camel said,
 And then stepped quickly on the riverbed.
 'Look, mouse, the water reaches to my knees. 3460
 Why are you stricken with anxieties?'
 'A dragon for me is an ant to you;
 There's a huge difference between us two:
 If it should reach your knees like you have said,
 Then it is far above my tiny head.'
 The camel said, 'Don't be so bold again,
 Or else you'll burn with soul-tormenting pain!
 Compete with your own species, and beware:
 You've nothing that a camel wants to share.'
 The mouse said, 'I repent! Please give a ride— 3465
 Help me to make it to the other side!
 The camel, moved with pity, told it, 'Jump!
 Climb on my back, then rest upon my hump.

This is not difficult for me to do;
I could take millions of small mice like you!

You're not a prophet—take the mystic way,
From this pit to reach lofty heights one day.
Act like a subject, since you're not the sultan!
Don't row the boat when you are not the boatman.
Since you're not perfect, don't start out alone. 3470
Be pliant like good dough, not hard like stone!
God said, '*Keep silent!*'* so don't you forget.
Be all ears, since you're not God's mouthpiece yet!
Request an explanation, if you speak.
Before the King, like beggars, show you're meek!
Lust causes hate and pride—that's not disputed;
And habit is what makes lust firmly rooted.
When habit makes a bad trait permanent,
To those who hold you back you're violent:
You want to eat mud now, so you'll oppose 3475
All men who hold you back, as if they're foes:
When pagans gather round an idol, they
Will fend off men who try to block their way.
Since Satan had got used to leading, he
Thought Adam his inferior heedlessly:
'Can there be someone who is my superior,
That I should have to bow as his inferior?']*
Leading is poison but for spirits who
Possess the antidote; such men are few:
Snakes in the mountains aren't cause for alarm; 3480
The antidote's found there too, so stay calm!
When leadership controls your brain, you'll see
Whoever thwarts you as your enemy;
If anyone should contradict your view,
Hatred of him will soon rise up in you:
You'll scream, 'He's trying to dictate to me,
Acting as if he has authority!'
If you do not have a bad disposition,
Why do you flare up with such opposition?

You may have once seemed good to your opponent 3485
 And won his heart like this, for at that moment
 Your bad ways weren't entrenched yet like sharp stakes—
 Through habit, ants of lust turn into snakes.
 Kill lust's snake, so you can survive the trial,
 Or it will be a dragon in a while!
 Each claims his snake's an ant, a trivial thing;
 About your true state ask a mystic king:
 Till turned to gold, copper no flaws can see;
 Till made king, one can't measure poverty.
 Copper, serve the elixir and you'll gain! 3490
 Endure, heart, your beloved's harsh disdain!
 Mystics are the beloveds—can't you see?
 They strive to flee this world continually;
 Stop finding fault with God's slaves, stupid fool,
 And don't accuse of theft the ones who rule!

*The miracles of that dervish who was accused
 of stealing on a ship*

A dervish once was travelling on a ship
 Without his own provisions for his trip.
 While he slept, someone's purse had disappeared;
 Those who'd searched all the rest then gradually neared.
 'Let's search this sleeping beggar,' one man said, 3495
 And so the purse's owner slapped his head:
 'A purse was lost on this ship just today;
 We have searched everyone—don't run away!
 Take off your jacket! Strip, so you can prove
 It wasn't you, and all our doubts remove!
 He prayed, 'God, Your meek slave might soon be killed,
 Accused of theft. May Your will be fulfilled!
 The dervish's heart then began to pound,
 And suddenly fish jumped up all around;
 A million fish then from the sea took flight, 3500
 In each one's mouth a pearl which was so bright;
 Millions of them rose up from the deep sea,
 Huge pearls held in their mouths triumphantly,

Each pearl the revenue of a whole nation;
They sang: 'They're God's, free from association!' 3505
The dervish threw some on the deck and flew
Up in the air, ascending a throne too:
Like kings, cross-legged he sat on his throne
Above the zenith, to which he had flown.
'You keep your ship; God will suffice for me.
This beggar won't stay in your company, 3510
But who will lose out from this separation?
I'm pleased with God, remote from His creation.
He won't blame me for theft mistakenly;
And, for accusers, He won't shackle me.'
The other passengers screamed out, amazed:
'To such a station how have you been raised?'
He said, 'Not for accusing mystic kings
And bothering God just for trivial things,
But rather for revering His elect— 3515
Great saints I didn't hassle or suspect!
Dervishes with sweet breath who've earned renown,
For whom the chapter *Abasa** came down—
Their poverty is not life trapped in dirt,
But "There is nothing but God" to assert.
How can I doubt God's special devotees,
Whom He's entrusted with His treasures?'
Suspect the self, not the high intellect;
Your senses, not God's light, you should reject.
This cunning carnal soul needs to be hit— 3520
Beat it instead of arguing with it!
If it sees miracles, it will agree,
Then later claim, 'It was mere fantasy;
If that huge miracle were really true
Why then did it not last and stay in view?'
It does remain in view for purest souls,
Though it's not seen by sensual animals;
That miracle hates sensuality:
When caged a peacock struggles to break free.
Don't say I am verbose, for what you've read
Is one small portion, one hair from your head!

*Some Sufis verbally abuse another Sufi, saying
‘He talks too much in front of the shaikh’*

Some Sufis cursed another angrily
 Before the shaikh of their community.
 They told the shaikh, ‘We beg that you demand
 Fairness from him. Please make him understand!’
 He asked, ‘What is it that makes you irate?’
 ‘He has three habits, shaikh, which irritate:
 He talks too much, as noisy as a bell;
 He eats more than a score of men as well;
 He sleeps more than the Sleepers in the Cave.’ 3525
 These reasons to their shaikh the Sufis gave.
 The shaikh turned to the blamed man then, to say:
 ‘In every venture take the middle way—
 The Prophet said, “*The best path’s moderation.*”
 A balanced nature leads to the best station;
 If you should fail to keep that harmony,*
 Sickness will overwhelm you suddenly.
 Do not exceed what you see in your friend,
 As that will cause division in the end.’

Moses’s words appeared proportionate, 3530
 But Khezr found them too inappropriate;
 Not tolerating doubting and debate,
 Khezr told him, ‘*This is where we separate!**’
 Moses, you talk too much, so go away!
 Be mute and blind if you desire to stay!
 If you remain here to debate all night,
 You’ll still have severed all ties in my sight!
 If you should soil yourself while you are praying,
 ‘Go, clean yourself!’ you’ll then hear a voice saying.
 If you don’t go, your prayer will be in vain, 3535
 For purity has left you, empty brain!*
 Go to your soulmates, who have the desire
 To hear your speech, and from it never tire!

The watchman's better than those fast asleep,
But fish don't need a watchman in the deep:
Men's clothes need washing, but illumination
Clothes naked souls with God's manifestation—
Step back from naked mystics carefully,
Or from your body's garment now break free!
If you won't strip completely, timid man, 3540
Follow a middle course then, if you can!

The Sufi excuses himself to the shaikh

The Sufi told the shaikh his point of view,
Giving appropriate excuses too;
He answered the shaikh's questions, as one should,
Like Khezr, with answers accurate and good,
Answers to Moses's interrogation
Inspired in Khezr by the Lord of Creation:
He clarified all the obscurities;
For all the problems he had found the keys.
From Khezr he had received inheritance— 3545
He answered his shaikh with intelligence:
'Shaikh, though the moderate way is best to live,
A mean is always something relative:
A stream won't even reach a camel's knee,
Although to mice it seems a massive sea;
If someone can eat four loaves, eating two
Is moderation from his point of view;
But it would be extreme if he should feast
By eating all four like a greedy beast.
But what if someone easily could eat ten? 3550
Eating six would be moderation then.
To eat a hundred loaves I'm capable,
You just six rolls—we're not comparable;
You may be tired out by the evening prayer,
While, after hundreds, I don't feel much wear;
One walks to Mecca, barefoot all the way,
Another can't reach local mosques to pray;

One is prepared to sacrifice his soul,
 Another won't give up a mouldy roll!
 For finite things, one can derive a mean, 3555
 As they have highs and lows which can be seen —
 Both start and end must be observable
 For something's mean to be discernible—
 There are no limits to the infinite,
 So how can one work out the mean of it
 When its extremities no man has known?
 “*If all the seas were ink*” * this truth has shown.
 If all seas turn to ink, still they can't write
 Enough for there to be an end in sight;
 If all the forests turn to pens, still they 3560
 Can't lessen what God's speech has to convey.
 The pens and ink will empty gradually;
 His boundless speech, though, lasts eternally.
 Sometimes I look asleep, then those astray
 Imagine all I do is sleep all day;
 My heart's awake, although I've closed my eyes—
 I'm working, but look lazy in disguise!

‘*My eyes sleep,*’ was the Prophet's affirmation,
 ‘*My heart's awake to the Lord of Creation.*’
 Eyes open, your heart sleeps now in their place; 3565
 Eyes closed, my heart is open to His Grace.
 My heart has other senses than these five;
 In both worlds my heart's special senses thrive—
 Don't look at me through your own failing sight!
 For me it's morning, though for you it's night;
 For you it's gaol, but it's a park for me:
 Your hard toil is my rest and luxury;
 Mud traps your feet, but makes my roses bloom;
 You mourn, while I rejoice with drums that boom.
 I live on earth like you, but I can fly 3570
 Beyond the stars and planets in the sky;
 My shadow's next to you, but I'm not here—
 My station's higher than thought's lofty sphere.

Since I've transcended all thoughts, I am now
 Racing beyond the questions 'why?' and 'how?'
 I rule thought and don't follow its instruction:
 The builder has control of his construction.
 Most men are slaves of thought, though, which explains
 Why, through depression, all life from them drains.
 By choice, I give myself to thoughts, but still 3575
 I can jump far from them when that's my will.
 While thought's a fly, I'm a bird soaring high—
 How can I be controlled by a mere fly?
 I came down from the zenith too by choice,
 So those at lower stations might rejoice;
 When I grow weary of their base traits, then,
 Like *birds with wings spread*,* I'll soar up again.
 From my own inner essence these wings grew—
 I didn't stick my wings on with some glue.
 Jāfar the Flyer's* wings were permanent; 3580
 Jāfar the Scoundrel's* wings were only lent.
 To those who *haven't tasted*, it's pretension;
 It's truth to those *in the most high dimension*.
 Vile crows may think I'm bragging with cheap lies—
 Empty and full pots are the same to flies!

Since pearls grow from the things you eat, good man,
 Don't hold back—eat as much food as you can!
 The shaikh, to fight off thoughts which were ill-willed,
 Vomited pearls until his bowl was filled.
 This mystic master made pearls manifest 3585
 To those who with such wisdom weren't blest.
 In you, though, food becomes impurity,
 So lock your throat and throw away the key!
 For him in whom food turns to Glory's Light,
 All things he eats are lawful, every bite!

*In explanation of how there are some claims, the
truth of which is self-evident*

If you know my soul well, you'll recognize
 My pithy words are not pretentious lies.
 If I tell you at midnight, 'I've come near,
 And, since we're kin, do not have any fear!'

You'll know for sure that these claims are both true, 3590
 For your own kin's voice is quite clear to you.
 Kinship and nearness are the claims made here;
 You'll know they're true if you can clearly hear,
 Because the sound of someone's voice can give
 Evidence that it is a relative;
 That joy at a voice known immediately
 Will testify he's from your family.
 But uninspired fools, who can't recognize
 A relative's voice from a passer-by's,
 Will say these words are unreliable— 3595
 Ignorance claims they are deniable.

Speech from a sage filled with God's light is known
 As truth from what that voice sounds like alone.
 In Arabic a man once made this claim:
 'I can speak Arabic.' This is the same:
 His speaking Arabic proves that it's true,
 And so it is self-evident to you.
 Literate people may each write this note:
 'I can both read and write,' as if to gloat.
 Though technically this is another claim, 3600
 The note proves that it's truthful all the same.
 A Sufi might say, 'In your dream last night,
 You saw me just as now I'm in your sight,
 And in that dream I gave a long oration,
 Explaining what is self-annihilation—
 Let it, like earrings, penetrate inside,
 So that my teachings serve as your mind's guide!'

Since you recall the dream that he has told,
It is a miracle worth more than gold;
Although, in form, a mere claim it may seem, 3605
Your soul says, 'It is true; I had that dream.'
*And the believer's camel that has strayed**
Is just like these examples I've conveyed:
If you find truth where it does not belong,
Why should you worry that it might be wrong?
When you tell someone thirsty, 'Hurry up!
Drink quickly from the water in this cup.'
Will any thirsty man say, 'What a claim!
Pretender, I can't trust you. What's your aim?
Show proof that water is contained inside 3610
From that rare *gushing source*,* and you've not lied!'
Or if a mother tells her child, 'Come near!
Since I'm your mother, you'll have naught to fear.'
Will the child say, 'I need some evidence
Before I drink your milk—prove it at once!'
For every nation who seeks God, the face
And voice of prophets show miraculous grace;
Thus, when their prophet shouts out to dictate,
Inwardly each of them bows down prostrate;
Their inner ear has not heard such a shout 3615
From a mere human, so they have no doubt—
If a strange voice should reach an inner ear,
It will know God is saying, '*I am near!*'*

*John the Baptist bows before the womb of the
mother of Jesus*

John's mother spoke to Mary secretly
Before she gave birth of this mystery:
'I've seen that a great king is inside you,
A prophet of God, *who is steadfast too*:*
When I encountered you by chance just now,
The child inside my womb began to bow—

My baby bowed to yours respectfully,
 And so I felt a strange new pang in me.'
 'Yes,' Mary said, 'In me a strange sensation
 Told me about your embryo's prostration.'

3620

A difficulty is raised by this story

The stupid men say, 'Leave this fable out,
 Since it is false; its accuracy we doubt,
 For Mary during pregnancy had gone
 As far as possible from everyone:
 That wonderful pure woman stayed away
 Until she gave birth—this is what texts say.
 While she was pregnant, no one ventured near
 And she did not go home—this much is clear.
 When she gave birth to Jesus joyfully,
 She then brought him before her family.
 When did John's mother see her then, to share
 What she had understood of this affair?'

3625

The resolution of the problem

Those with true vision easily can view
 Remote things as though they are present too:
 John's mother was to Mary visible
 And near, although that seems impossible.
 With eyes closed you can see your distant friend,
 If you can see through skin and comprehend.
 Even if she did not see inwardly
 John's mother, still accept this tale from me,
 Unlike those who hear stories but insist
 They aren't true, like a strict literalist:
 'Kalila knew no language,' some men say,
 'How could he hear what Dimna would convey?'
 But if these two friends did communicate,
 It wasn't with words men articulate.
 How was that Dimna an emissary
 Sent to the ox and lion? Answer me!

3630

3635

An ox can't be the lion's chief vizier;
The moon can't fill an elephant with fear.
This book of fables is made up, we know,
Because a stork can't share words with a crow.'
A story is a bushel which contains
Meanings inside, as though they are wheat grains—
The wise man will take meaning's grains, but pay
No heed to bushels, which will fade away:
The tale about the rose and nightingale* 3640
Is rich in meaning, though it's just a tale.

*On speaking with a mystic tongue and the
comprehension of it*

Heed well the moth and candle tale,* my friend!
Learn from its message, if you comprehend!
Though speechless, it shows inner depths of speech—
Soar high, friend, to where feeble owls can't reach!
A chess-player said, 'This is the rook's own space.'
Someone asked, 'How did it obtain that place?
Did it inherit it or buy it cheaply?'
Happy the message-seeker who dives deeply!
'*X struck Y*,'* a grammarian used to say, 3645
'What had Y done?' an idiot asked one day,
'That X should strike him with such vehemence,
Like beating slaves, blind to their innocence?'
'This is the bushel only,' he replied,
'Take out its wheat and then throw it aside!
X and Y are examples of a rule—
Though they are fictions, learn the grammar, fool!'
That man complained, 'I cannot understand
How X hit blameless Y then with his hand!'
The teacher joked, 'That's what he had to do, 3650
For Y once stole an extra W!'
X hit that thief as soon as he observed
That he had sinned; it's what that Y deserved!

*Acceptance of worthless sayings by the hearts of
worthless people*

This fool said, 'Now the truth I can detect!
 To crooked men, corrupt things are correct.
 If you tell a cross-eyed man, 'There's one moon'
 He'll say, 'I see two, so don't speak too soon!
 If someone jokes with him, 'I can see two!
 He deems it true—for such fools that's their due.
 Liars attract lies to themselves—recite: 3655
 '*To wicked women bad men*,'* which sheds light!
 Those with big hearts have power over all,
 While blind men always stumble, trip, and fall.

The search for that tree with fruit which gives eternal life

A wise man told this tale: 'There is a tree
 In India which hides a mystery:
 Whoever eats its fruit will not grow old
 Or die.' This summarizes what he told.
 A king heard this and found the tale impressive;
 He longed for that tree and became obsessive.
 He sent a capable emissary, 3660
 An erudite man, to seek out that tree.
 For years this cultured man then roamed about
 In India, where he sought this rare tree out.
 This poor man went from town to town in vain,
 And searched in every island, hill, and plain.
 Men laughed at him when asked about this tree,
 And said, 'Your search is sheer insanity!
 Many in ridicule would slap his face
 And say, 'Distinguished man, pride of your race,
 How can the search by one with your fine brain 3665
 And pure heart be so obviously in vain?'
 These false words were slaps also to his mind,
 And harder to bear than the other kind.

Sarcastically they praised him, 'Noble man,
Head for this dangerous place now, if you can,
For in a forest there is a green tree,
One lofty, broad, and bushy—you will see.'
The king's emissary searched each location,
But people gave conflicting information.
For years he kept on searching everywhere 3670
With cash from his king, who had sent him there,
But he grew weary in this foreign land
And felt so weak that he could hardly stand.
He hadn't found a single trace or clue,
Just rumours from men acting like they knew,
And all this disappointment snapped hope's thread,
So what he'd sought he now ignored instead.
Finally, he decided he must go
Back to the king; as he walked tears would flow.

*The shaikh explains the secret of the tree to that
seeker who had only imitative knowledge**

There was a mystic at a halting-place 3675
When he arrived, tears rolling down his face.
He thought, 'With desperate need, I'll venture near
Before I have to move away from here,
So that his prayer supports me when we part,
Since I can't find the true aim of my heart.'
He walked towards the shaikh with tear-filled eyes;
Tears dropped like rain from clouds in heavy skies.
He pleaded, 'Shaikh, have mercy now on me!
This is the time for generosity.'
'Explain what is the cause of your despair— 3680
What are you looking for that is so rare?'
He said, 'The king told me to come and find
A bushy tree which is one of a kind;
Not only rare, its fruit is special too—
Water of Life each one bestows on you.
I searched for many years, but found no trace;
I found just ridicule in this vile place!'

The shaikh then laughed and said, 'Hey simple-brain,
 This tree is knowledge which the mystics gain.
 It's the most tall, wide, and expansive tree; 3685
 It's Water of Life from God's boundless sea.
 You looked for the tree's form, so in the end
 You picked no fruit of inner truth, my friend.
 In fact, it's only sometimes called "a tree"—
 At other times it's "sun", "cloud", or "the sea";
 From that one source a million things arise,
 With immortality its smallest prize.
 Myriads of effects arise from it,
 And therefore countless names appear to fit:
 Your father is a father just to you— 3690
 He has to be another man's son too;
 He could be someone's foe, while to another
 He could be dearer even than a brother.
 One man can have a million names like this;
 Watch just one side and the whole view you'll miss.
 To seek the name whoever has selected
 Will soon feel, like you, hopeless and dejected.
 Why cling to the name "tree"? You're obstinate!
 You'll thus stay bitter and unfortunate!
 Look to the attributes, transcend the name— 3695
 They'll lead you to the essence, your true aim.*
 Disputes between men stem from names, my friend;
 Should they reach meanings, then peace would descend.

*Four men argue about grapes, because each knows
 them by a different name*

Four men received a coin and they were poor;
 One of them said, 'Let's spend it on *angur*!'

The second man, an Arab, screamed out, 'Stop!
 Don't buy *angur*, but *ʿenab* from the shop!'

The third, a Turk, said, 'Just ignore the rest!
 Don't buy *ʿenab*, for *uzum* tastes the best.'

'Stop all this talk!' the fourth, a Greek, then said, 3700
 'Because I want some *estafil** instead.'

They started quarrelling, each unaware
 Of what the other names meant, what they share;
 They punched each other out of ignorance—
 Empty of knowledge, each of them a dunce.
 A mystic knowing all their languages
 Could have united these four savages;
 He would have said, 'With this coin I will buy
 Some grapes, which will each of you satisfy.
 Submit your hearts sincerely now, as you 3705
 Will see one coin make all your dreams come true!

Your single coin will thus transform to four;
 Four foes will join as one and fight no more.
 What each of you says causes separation,
 While what I say brings reconciliation;
 Therefore, *keep silent*,* as God's told you to,
 So I can serve as tongue for all of you!
 Even if your speech sounds like it unites,
 Instead it causes arguments and fights.

Borrowed heat cannot warm you like a hearth; 3710
 Something innately hot has special worth:
 Though you warm vinegar next to a flame,
 Drinking it makes you colder all the same,
 Because it isn't hot intrinsically—
 Its nature's sour and cold originally.*

Instead if you pour grape juice in your cup
 And drink it down, it warms your liver up.
 Thus, the pretence of shaikhs who truly see
 Is better than the blind's sincerity.
 From the shaikh's speech comes union and elation; 3715
 Blind literalists cause only separation.

About King Solomon's time you have heard:
 He knew the language of each kind of bird.
 Leopards and deer in his just realm were friends—
 They stopped their fighting and they made amends;

The dove no longer feared the falcon's claws;
 The sheep were not afraid of the wolves' jaws—
 As mediator for each enemy,
 To all the world's birds he brought unity.
 Since you're an ant, you hunt for grain all day— 3720
 Seek Solomon and don't remain astray!
 The grain you hunt will end up trapping you;
 Seek Solomon and you will find grain too!
 For bird-like souls there's no security
 In these times from each other's cruelty,
 Although there's one with Solomon's high station
 Who'd bring peace and end all cruel exploitation—
 'There is no nation', you must now recall,
 'To which a warner wasn't sent at all.'*
 God said, 'There's not been one community 3725
 To whom I haven't sent a deputy.'
 Their bird-like souls this mystic unifies,
 So they will end pretence, deceit, and lies,
 And act more like a mother to her son:
 The Prophet said that Muslim souls are one.
 Muslims through him attained this unity,
 Though previously each was an enemy:

The removal of disputes and enmity among the Ansar
 through the grace of the Prophet.*

Two tribes called Aws and Khazraj were at war;*
 It seemed that they would feud for evermore,
 But, through the Prophet, their longstanding fight 3730
 Became effaced within Islam's pure light—
 These foes became like brothers magically,
 Just like a bunch of grapes appears to be.
 Believers are true brothers*—unison
 Means each dissolves his body to be one;
 The grapes appear like brothers on the vine,
 But, when you squeeze them, they become one wine.

Unripe and ripe are opposites in name,
But, when unripe grapes ripen, they're the same.
Those grapes which never ripen properly 3735
Were infidels from pre-eternity;
A grape like that is always shunned as well,
Since it's condemned to be an infidel.
If I should tell what that grape hides within,
A riot and dissension would begin;
What infidels hide one should never tell—
Keep out of paradise the smoke of hell!
Unripened grapes with the capacity,
Through mystics, will develop magically;
To ripened grapes they will transform so fast, 3740
Leave spite and dualism in the past,
Then, as ripe grapes, their own skin they will flay,
So they might form a unity this way.
If one's not joined, a friend becomes a foe,
But one who's joined won't deal himself a blow.

May the shaikh's love be blest continually!
It gives a million atoms unity;
What once was mud on some abandoned land
Becomes a clay jar with the potter's hand.
Unity in our bodies made of clay 3745
Is less than that of souls still in a way.
Analogies put forth for illustration
Might just confuse your brains and cause frustration.
A Solomon now lives with us, but we
Fail to see men in close proximity;
Men can be blinded by farsightedness:
A sleeping man can't see his bedroom's mess.
We all delight in subtle conversation,
Untying knots our favourite recreation;
Tying and opening our knots, like fools, 3750
For answering questions we just make more rules,
Just like a bird which opens up its snare
Then closes it, to master skills so rare—

She's thus deprived of open countryside;
 With knots her whole life is preoccupied.
 The snare does not grow flimsier one bit;
 The bird's wings, though, are snapped apart by it.
 Don't struggle with such knots forever, please!
 Your wings will be snapped by your expertise.
 A million birds have snapped their wings apart, 3755
 And yet from this world they could not depart.
 In the Qur'an read all about that kind,
 From '*They explored—a refuge could they find?*'*

Those men's fight over grapes which we've related
 Was not solved, nor their rage eliminated,
 Until that mystic Solomon came near
 And made their dualism disappear.
 As falcons hear the drumbeats from the king,
 You too must heed them and stop arguing!
 From all directions fly there to be free! 3760
 Replace your differences with unity!
*Wherever you are, turn your face that way!**
He's not forbidden it—do not delay!
 We are inept birds with the blindest eyes—
 That Solomon we still can't recognize.
 Like owls, we are the falcons' enemy,
 And so we stay near ruins stubbornly.
 Out of our wretched ignorance and blindness,
 We hurt those privileged to receive God's kindness.
 The birds which Solomon made radiant 3765
 Can't tear apart wings of the innocent;
 Rather, they'd take to helpless birds some grain,
 Since they're kind and their hearts no spite contain.
 Their hoopoe longs to praise their king, and so
 The path to Queens of Sheba it will show.*
 Their crow is one in form alone; inside
 She is a falcon which *turned not aside*.*
 'Lak-lak!' their stork is always heard to shout;
 With unity's fire, she sets fire to doubt.

On seeing falcons, their dove feels no dread— 3770
Before this dove each falcon lays her head;
The nightingale, whose song makes your heart spin,
Has a rose-garden hidden deep within;
Their parrot needs no sugar any more—
Within she's found an everlasting store;
Their peacocks' feet are lovelier to view
Than plumage other peacocks show to you;
Khaqani's birds' speech echoes all around,
But where can Solomon's birds' speech be found? *
How can you know the squawks of birds, my son, 3775
When you have never met King Solomon?
The wings of that bird which sings mystic songs
To realms beyond both East and West belongs;
From God's throne comes each of its songs of love,
And it returns majestically above.
A bird which flies without this Solomon
Loves darkness like a bat and flees the sun.
Join with King Solomon, rejected bat,
So you won't stay forever blind like that!
Walk one yard on the path which leads to treasure, 3780
Then, like the yard, your step will serve as measure.
Though now you limp and hobble to your aim,
You'll soon discover you're no longer lame!

*The story about the ducklings nurtured
by a domestic bird*

Though you're a duck's child, a domestic bird
Has nurtured you, but still you haven't heard.
Your mother's from that ocean—know your worth!
Your nurse is the one who's attached to earth.
Your heart yearns passionately for the ocean;
From your true mother it gained that emotion.
Your fondness for the world comes from your nurse— 3785
Abandon her! Her views are always worse!

Leave the nurse on dry land and move beyond,
 Into Truth's ocean, like ducks in a pond!
 Don't fear the water, though they've taught you to—
 Dive in the ocean with no more ado!
 You can live on both land and water, duck,
 Unlike those land birds who must live in muck.
We've honoured Adam's children—God has planned
 For you to ride through water and on land:
 Keep '*We've conveyed them on the sea*' in mind, 3790
 Leave '*We've conveyed them to the land*'* behind.
 Angels have no way to reach land below,
 And of that ocean most men do not know.
 In body animal, angel in soul,
 On both earth and the heavens you can stroll.
 Human *like you*, but at a lofty station,
 Some men have been *inspired by revelation*.*
 Although their earthly bodies landed here,
 Their spirits roam around the highest sphere.
 We are all waterfowl, my mystic friends; 3795
 Our languages that ocean comprehends.
 It's Solomon, while we're birds of a feather;
 We're travelling with Solomon forever.
 Just like King Solomon, step in the sea—
 It will make David's chain-mail instantly.*
 That Solomon now stands in front of you—
 He's blocked all eyes, but for the worthy few:
 From slumber, ignorance, and needless fuss,
 Most feel fatigued when he's in front of us.
 Thunder makes thirsty men's ears ring with pain, 3800
 Not knowing joy's clouds soon will make it rain;
 The flowing stream is where they've fixed their eyes,
 Ignorant of the water from the skies:
 To causes they ride aspiration's steed
 And not the Causer—veiled, they won't take heed.
 The Causer some men can identify—
 On causes in this world they won't rely.

Pilgrims are amazed at the miracles of an ascetic whom they find alone in the desert

Once in the desert there was a fakir
 Immersed in worship like those men revere.
 Pilgrims from many countries would pass by 3805
 And notice this ascetic looking dry—
 His nature wasn't dry, just the location;
 He could survive the fierce winds and privation.
 The pilgrims were stunned by his solitude,
 And by his good health and his fortitude:
 He stood and prayed on sand that was so hot
 It could boil water poured into a pot,
 As if he were in gardens that feel cool,
 Or on Boraq, or on the Prophet's mule,*
 Or that his feet were on silk tapestries, 3810
 And desert winds cooled him like a sweet breeze.
 Some pilgrims stood there in anticipation,
 For him to finish off his supplication.
 Once he'd returned from his absorbing prayer,
 One of them, the most sharp-eyed person there,
 Saw water dripping from his hands and face,
 His clothes damp with ablution's water's trace:
 'From where does water come to this dry land?'
 Towards the sky above he raised his hand.
 'Does it rain down whenever you can't cope, 3815
 Without wells, or *palm fibres** for their rope?
 Faith's sultan, please reveal this mystery,
 So that your state might give us certainty!
 Help us to understand the truth this way,
 So we might cut doubt's girdle straight away!
 He looked up at the sky and slowly said
 'Answer these pilgrims' prayer, so they'll be led!
 I seek my sustenance from You above,
 Because You've opened Your door with kind love.

From Placelessness You've made this place appear, 3820
 "*Your daily bread's in heaven*" * You've made clear.'
A cloud approached once he had said this prayer,
 Slowly, like elephants which walk with care.
As if from skins, rain poured down suddenly,
 Filling all hollows which their eyes could see;
The cloud kept raining like a bowl upturned;
 The pilgrims stood there with mouths open, stunned.
Due to these marvels, one group zealously
 Cut off their girdles of uncertainty.*
Another group's faith was intensified 3825
 Due to this feat—*God knows best how to guide*.
The rest stayed sceptical, though it was clear—
 They'll stay inadequate. This book ends here.

BOOK THREE

Prose Introduction

Pieces of wisdom are the armies of God by which He strengthens the spirits of seekers, and keeps their knowledge away from the tarnish of ignorance, their justice from the tarnish of tyranny, their generosity from the tarnish of self-display, and their intelligence from the tarnish of stupidity. He makes accessible to them the understanding of the afterlife that had been too challenging for them, while also making easy for them the acts of obedience and self-exertion that had proven too hard before. This wisdom is also part of the evidences and proofs of the Prophets, informing about God's secrets and His sovereignty specially for mystics, and how He causes the luminous pearl-like heavens of His compassion to revolve above the vaporous global sphere, the same way that the intellect controls earthly forms and their external and internal senses. The revolving of those spiritual heavens controls the vaporous heavens, the radiant meteors, the illumined lamps, the nurturing winds, the expanses of land, and the constantly flowing waters. May God benefit His servants with them and increase their understanding.

Each reader can understand only according to the capacity of his mind, the pietist can only perform devotions according to the strength of his self-exertion, the mufti can give rulings only according to his ability to reason them out, the alms-giver can give alms only according to the limit of his means, the donor can give only from what he possesses, and the recipient of his generosity can only acquire what he can know about. However, he who seeks water in the desert will not be prevented from seeking it by his knowledge of what is contained in the seas, and he will be determined in his search for this Water of Life, so as not to be cut off from it by pre-occupation with daily life, nor to be hindered by illness, need, or the interference of desires between him and the goal to which he is hurrying. Knowledge will not be attained by the one who prefers lust, nor the one who relies on gentle treatment, nor the one who turns back from his search, nor the one who fears for himself, nor the one who is anxious about his own welfare, unless he takes refuge with God and prioritizes his spiritual affairs over his worldly ones, then takes from the treasure of wisdom such magnificent wealth that neither depreciates nor becomes inherited like worldly inheritance, and also acquires the glorious lights, the noble jewels,

*and the precious domains, giving thanks for His grace, magnifying His power, and glorifying His strength; and unless he seeks refuge in God from the baseness of affluence and the ignorance of overvaluing the little that he sees in himself while undervaluing the great amount he obtains from others, causing him to become proud of things that God has not even permitted for him. Rather, the seeker who possesses knowledge must learn what he does not know and teach others what he has learnt, be compassionate to those of weak intelligence, avoid becoming proud due to the folly of the stupid, or becoming harsh towards the dull-witted: 'You used to be that way before yourself, but then God was generous to you.'**

*God is exalted far above the sayings of the blasphemers, the worship of associate gods by polytheists, the accusation of defect by those who are themselves deficient, the human comparisons of the anthropomorphists, the evil suppositions of the intellectuals, and the estimations of those who follow illusions. Praise belongs to Him and glory for the composition of the divine and holy Masnavi. He is the One who enables success, the Sender of Grace, and to Him belongs Power and Bestowal to His mystic servants especially, despite a group who 'desire to extinguish the Light of God with their mouths—God will make His light complete its course even if the infidels hate it.'** *'We have sent down the reminder and We are its guards.'** *'Whoever alters it after he has heard it will bear the guilt for this. God is Hearing, Knowing.'** *Praise be to God, the Lord of the worlds, and blessings on our chief Mohammad, his family, and his pure and good companions altogether, through Your Grace, O Most Gracious One!*

Exordium

O Light of Truth, Hosamoddin, bring please

Book Three—the Prophet would do things in threes.*

Open the box of secrets it contains;

For more excuses no time now remains.

Your power arrives from God's power, its true source,

Not from mere veins which pulse with lust's full force;

This lamp, the sun, itself burns radiantly—

A cotton wick and oil aren't necessary;

And heaven's vault has stayed up for so long

Without ropes or tall pillars which stand strong;

And Gabriel's power came not from food, but seeing
 The Master and Creator of all being—
 The power of God's Abdals, His true elite,
 Derives from Him, not from the food they eat.
 Even their bodies have been made with light,
 So they surpass the angels in God's sight.
 You've gained God's attributes, so you're prepared—
 Walk through the flames like Abraham once dared!
 Fire will become '*coolness and comfort too*'*— 10
 Such elements will serve as slaves to you.
 The natural elements are in each creature,
 But still your constitution is superior:
 Your constitution's from beyond this sphere—
 It came to manifest His oneness here.
 People's capacity to understand
 Is limited and it will not expand.
 O Light of Truth, your piercing sight alone
 Can give the power to understand to stone;
 Mount Sinai through that great epiphany 15
 Drank much more than its own capacity:
The mountain split apart due to one glance;
*Just like a camel it began to dance!**

Many kind men would give you meat tomorrow
 But only God gives throats with which to swallow;
 One for your neck, one for your spirit too:
 He gives a throat to every part of you.
 He'll give when you reflect His majesty,
 Once empty of deceit and vanity;
 You then won't tell to every passer-by 20
 His secrets, thus leave sugar for a fly.
 God's secrets only reach those who possess
 A hundred tongues but stay mute nonetheless.
 God's grace bestows a throat to earth's soil, so
 It swallows water and help plants to grow;
 And He gives creatures lips and throats, so they
 Consume plants and develop in this way.

Each animal that eats plants grows in size
 And serves as food for humans when it dies.
 Once it returns to earth, it will consume 25
 The human corpse that's left beneath its tomb.
 I've seen mere atoms open-mouthed, my friend;
 Describing their food takes too long to end.
 Provisions are first nourished by His grace,
 And He feeds nourishers in the first place.
 The Lord provides our sustenance below—
 Without their own food how could wheat fields grow?
 The whole of this can never be expressed;
 This sample represents for you the rest.

Most things eat then are eaten by another; 30
 Eternal ones are fortunate, my brother.
 This world is transient, as are those inside;
 The other world and its souls will abide.
 Lovers of this world have become divided,
 Lovers of that world permanently united.
 Noble ones for themselves desire to pour
 Water of Life which lasts for ever more.
The good deeds which endure come from these few
 Because they're flawless and they lack fear too;
 Though they be thousands, they're just one inside, 35
 Unlike mere fancies, which get multiplied.
 Throats are with swallows and what they've eaten,
 As brains are with the conquerors and the beaten.
 He gave a throat to Truth's rod, it's well known—
 It swallowed all the other rods then thrown;*
 But it did not increase in size at all,
 Since it did not eat like an animal.
 He also gave a throat to certitude,
 So it could make doubts vanish just like food.
 Spiritual things have throats too, which seems odd, 40
 But the provider of such throats is God;
 There's nothing in creation that's without
 A throat through which to feed, so have no doubt!

But when the soul's throat disregards its body,
 Its sustenance then comes straight from God's glory.
 To change one's nature is the sole condition;
 An evil constitution brings perdition.
 When a man starts to eat mud, he'll become
 Sickly and pale, miserable and glum;
 But should his ugly nature change one night, 45
 His face would, like a candle, shine so bright.
 The baby needs a wet-nurse who can treat
 Its mouth with kindness, making it taste sweet;
 If she should block the way now to her breast,
 She'll open up to him the path that's best,
 For nipples veil the child from what's in store—
 Bountiful feasts with food for ever more.
 On weaning, therefore, human life depends—
 So keep on striving! Here this discourse ends.

A foetus feeds on blood, which is unclean*— 50
 Believers can still draw from that what's clean;
 The infant moves from blood to milk instead,
 With solid food the final goal ahead.
 Solid food makes him a Loqman, the aim:
 A skilful hunter of all hidden game.
 If you had told that foetus in the womb:
 'Outside there is a realm with lots of room,
 A pleasant, verdant realm that is so spacious
 With lots of food that you will find delicious,
 With oceans, plains, and mountains waiting too, 55
 And farms and orchards growing fruit for you,
 A lofty sky that shines the brightest light
 Through sunshine, moonbeams, and the stars at night,
 And, due to winds from north, south, east, and west,
 Those orchards bloom with fragrance that is blest—
 Such wonders that can't be described in full,
 So why stay in the dark so miserable?
 Why stay here to drink blood in this cramped cell,
 Which is unclean and has an awful smell?'

The foetus would have just denied all day 60
 All of the things which you'd tried to relay,
 Saying: 'Impossible, delusory!'—
 Blind minds can't picture what they cannot see:
 Since they have never seen things of this sort,
 Their doubting ears will not hear your report.
 That's like when mystics holding a high station
 Speak to men from the general population,
 Saying: 'This world's a dark and narrow pit;
 There is a better world outside of it.'
 These true words are not heeded; such instruction 65
 Is blocked from ears by lust, that huge obstruction;
 Lust stops ears hearing, while base coveting
 Prevents their eyes from seeing anything.
 The foetus also has this attitude
 For blood, which in the womb is its sole food:
 Blood's all it knows while it stays tightly curled;
 Lust for blood stops it hearing of this world.

*Story about those who ate a baby elephant, shunning
the advice of a counsellor*

This story set in India all should know:
 A sage saw a small gang once long ago,
 All naked, empty-handed, looking hungry 70
 And like they'd been on an extended journey.
 A deep compassion filled him instantly;
 He greeted them and blossomed like a tree:
 'I know your hunger and lack of possessions
 Bring suffering just like Kerbala's transgressions.
 For God's sake, glorious group, if you should hunt,
 Don't try to catch a baby elephant!
 An elephant's in the vicinity—
 Don't hunt its babies! Listen now to me:
 You'll see them as you travel on your way 75
 And they can tempt you easily to stray,

For they are gentle, very weak, and fat—
Their mother, though, is watching out for that.
To find her children she'd search far and wide,
And groan and sigh as anguish burns inside.
Her trunk emits huge flames and poisonous smoke,
So don't dare harm her children—it's no joke!

Saints are God's children, son, you must beware—
In presence and in absence act with care!
Don't deem their absence a deficiency,
Since God takes vengeance for them wrathfully:
He said, 'These saints are children of my own
In exile, but all glory's theirs alone;
They're orphaned and left helpless as a test—
In secret, I am with the ones I've blessed.
I'm their support and give immunity;
It is as if they are all part of me.

80

They are my men of cloth—beware, good son!
They are a million and yet they are one.'

If this were not true, tell me then how could
Moses stun Pharaoh with a piece of wood?*

85

Or Noah, with just one curse, make the sea
Submerge the East and West so easily?*

If not, could Lot have razed down to the ground
All of the towns and settlements around?*

Towns just like paradise were caused to turn
To a black Tigris—find their trace and learn!

Near Syria you'll find remnants still of them
As you pass southwards to Jerusalem.

Numerous Prophets dealt to generations
God's punishments for their abominations.

90

If I continue with this speech today
Mountains will turn to blood without delay;
They'll bleed, then go back to their solid state,
Though you can't see them, you blind reprobate!
Blind men who boast they have the clearest vision
See just the camel's hairs with fine precision.

Man, through his greed, inspects it hair by hair;
 Then dances for no reason like a bear.
 Dance where you'll break your self, then with full trust 95
 Tear off the plaster from your wound of lust!
 Real men whirl on the battlefield, not here;
 They dance in their own blood and feel no fear.
 They clap when they escape the self's control;
 They dance once they've escaped the carnal soul.
 Their minstrels play the tambourine within;
 Seas surge with foam, excited by their din.
 Though you can't see them, leaves on every tree
 Hanging from branches clap in ecstasy.
 You can't see leaves clap and you cannot hear— 100
 You need the heart's ear not the outward ear.
 Block the head's ear from lies and mockery
 To see the soul's own city vividly.
 Mohammad's ear heard secrets through each word:
 God said, '*He is an ear.*'* Have you not heard?
 He is entirely ear and eye, and he
 Feeds us like suckling babies generously.
 The truth is boundless—let's return again
 Back to the elephants and those warned men.

*Continuation of the story about those who bothered
the young elephant*

'The elephant smells breath,' the sage then said, 105
 'And feels men's stomachs if they seem well fed
 Until she finds her child's last resting place—
 Her force and vengeance then they'll have to face!'

You eat the flesh of God's slaves every day
 By backbiting, and so you'll have to pay.
 Beware, for the Creator smells your breath
 And only the sincere escape from death.
 Later, inside their graves, those who now sneer
 Will be found out by Monker and Nakir.*

You cannot pull your mouth back from those two, 110
Nor sweeten fetid breath produced by you;
And there's no make-up there to hide behind,
Nor way to flee from truth for your small mind.
Their heavy mace so many times will pound
On heads and backsides of each babbler found.
Just think what Azrael's huge mace could do
Even if now its form is far from view.
Sometimes these maces' scary forms are seen—
Every man who is sick knows what I mean:
'Tell me, dear friends,' a very sick man said, 115
'What is this sword that's pointing at my head?'
'We can't see it,' they say, 'It's your delusion!'
No, this is death and it is no illusion.
It's not imaginary; even the sky
Becomes transparent, fearing it will die.
The sick man can see swords and maces swing
While he hangs his own head down, whimpering;
He sees them aim at him most threateningly,
Even if no one else's eyes can see.
When greed leaves him he then will gain sharp sight; 120
When this man bleeds to death his eyes grow bright—
What tragic timing to see at that stage,
Yet blind before due to his pride and rage.
Such birds which sing too early or too late*
Are those which people will decapitate.
Your soul each moment struggles hard with death—
Think of your faith as though it's your last breath.
Your life is like a purse, and night and day
Are counters of gold coins you've put away:
The counter takes all coins out one by one, 125
Then there is an eclipse of the whole sun.
If you should take and not put back, it's clear
That even mountains would soon disappear.
Once you've breathed out—breathe in a breath the same
Till through '*bow down, approach!*'* you reach your aim.
Struggling to finish work is a mistake
Apart from work which is for your faith's sake.

You want to go without being ready, though
 Your deeds are barren just like unbaked dough.
 You cannot build your tomb with these alone: 130
 Materials such as plaster, wood and stone.
 Dig a grave for yourself with purity—
 In His existence bury vanity!
 Become His dust with yearning at your death,
 So that your breath is nourished by His breath.
 A shrine with domes and turrets won't impress
 The mystics who could not care for them less.
 Look at the men in satin clothes out there—
 Does his fine satin make him more aware?
 His soul is now in torment, torn apart; 135
 Scorpions of grief have settled in his heart.
 He may appear embellished from outside,
 But there are desperate, bitter thoughts inside,
 While those who wore a patched-up dervish cloak
 Had sweet thoughts and used sweet words when they spoke.

Resumption of the story about the elephant

The sage continued, 'Heed well my advice,
 So that your souls won't pay a heavy price.
 Be satisfied with leaves and grass! Don't hunt
 Instead a stumbling baby elephant.
 I've done my duty conscientiously— 140
 If you heed me you'll gain felicity.
 To pass on this advice is why I came,
 So I might spare you from regret and shame.
 Don't let yourselves be led astray by greed
 Or torn up from your very roots—take heed!
 The sage then said, 'Farewell!' and walked away.
 Their hunger doubled each hour of that day
 Until they noticed near the road ahead
 A baby elephant which looked well fed—
 Like drunken wolves out on a desperate hunt, 145
 They ravaged totally that elephant.

One of the group did not partake and said,
 'That man's advice keeps ringing in my head.'
Those words prevented him from eating too—
 Old wisdom gives new fortune thus to you.
The rest collapsed and quickly fell asleep
 While he stayed up like shepherds with their sheep.
He saw a scary elephant appear;
 She saw him act as guard and so drew near
And sniffed three times to smell his mouth and face, 150
 But didn't sense a murderous scent's trace.
She circled him some more then went away;
 That elephant queen didn't make him pay.
She smelt the lips of all the sleepers then
 And guilty smells still lingered on those men,
Revealing that they had devoured her child,
 So she immediately grew very wild:
Each one of them she fiercely tore apart,
 Feeling no doubt at all inside her heart.
She then threw in the air each of those men— 155
 They split apart on crashing down again.

Drinker of people's blood, get out of sight
 Before blood relatives should come and fight.
Their wealth is similar to their blood of course,
 Because their wealth is taken too by force.
The mother elephant, consumed with hate,
 Will gain her vengeance on all those who ate.
When you take bribes, you eat her child up too—
 The mother's vengeance will soon strangle you!
You can tell devious people by their smell, 160
 And elephants can smell kin just as well.
One who smells scent from Yemen easily
 Is bound to notice falsehood's smell on me:
Mohammad once smelt scent from far away,*
 So, from our mouths, he can smell ours today.
He smells our scent and yet he never tells;
 To heaven rise both good and rotten smells.

Your sin's stench rises up while you are sleeping
 Until it strikes against the furthest ceiling.
 It's carried in your foul breath up from here 165
 To the breath-smellers in the highest sphere.
 The stench of greed, conceit, and lust as well,
 Through speech will seem just like an onion's smell.
 'I swear I've never eaten them,' you claim,
 'I've given garlic up too just the same.'
 The breath which you emit within this speech
 Wafts through the nostrils of all men in reach—
 Your prayers too by their own smell are denied;
 Through tongues, corrupt hearts are identified.
 'Begone!' is the reply such prayers receive; 170
 The cudgel drives off men who would deceive.
 But if the meaning's true, God won't reject
 Your words, though how you speak is incorrect.

*In the sight of the beloved, a mistake by a lover
 is better than the good deed of a stranger*

Belal, the first muezzin, was sincere,
 But he would mispronounce the call '*Come here!*'*
 So some said, 'Prophet, there's too much at stake,
 While we expand, to let pass this mistake.
 O Messenger, bring a muezzin please
 Who won't call out with such inaccuracies.
 At our religion's birth, no person should 175
 Be left to mispronounce "*Come to the good!*"*
 The Prophet boiled with rage and then revealed
 Some of the graces which had been concealed:
 'To God, Belal's "*Come!*" sounds much better than
 A thousand "*Come!*"s from a well-spoken man.
 Don't make me angry or I might begin
 To tell about the things you hide within!
 If your breath doesn't smell sweet during prayer,
 Seek a pure-hearted person everywhere!

***God's command to Moses: 'Call unto me with a mouth
which has not sinned!'***

God said, 'Moses, you have to pray to me 180
With a mouth free from sin for sanctuary.'
'But I have no such mouth, God!' Moses said.
'Pray then with someone else's mouth instead.
When have you sinned with mouths of other men?
To call "O God!" use mouths of others then!
Do it in such a way that their mouths pray
For you each night and every single day!
Using a mouth which is completely sinless—
Another man's mouth—start to beg forgiveness!
Or strive to make your own mouth pure instead 185
And make your spirit sharp, one step ahead.'

Remembering God is pure: when purity
Arrives defilement is obliged to flee.
Things flee their opposites, and so the night
Disappears when the sun emits its light:
When His pure name is what a mouth should say
Impurity and worry cannot stay.

***Explanation of how the supplicant's mentioning
of God's name is the same as God's saying,
'Here I am!'***

'Allah! Allah!' a Muslim would repeat
Until, through prayer, his pious lips grew sweet.
Satan said, 'That's too much! You've yet to hear 190
To your "Allah!" the answer "*I am here!*"
From His throne no responses will come down,
So why still chant "*Allah!*" with that deep frown?'

That Muslim's heart broke and he hung his head low,
 But then he dreamed he saw Khezr in a meadow.
 Khezr asked him, 'Why don't you chant any more?
 Do you regret the prayers you sent before?'
 He said, "'*Here I am!*'* won't come as reply;
 God has rejected me, so this is why.'
 'Your "*Allah!*" is God's "*Here I am!*" call too,
 Your need and pain God's messenger to you:
 God says, "Your struggles were our moves to meet,
 Approaching you and setting free your feet.
 The noose of Our Grace formed your fear and love;
 To your '*Allah!*' '*Here I am!*' rings above.'"

195

The souls of stupid men are far from prayer
 Because to pray 'O Lord!' is not their share.
 Their mouths and hearts are closed up with a seal,
 So they can't moan to God of pain they feel:
 God gave to Pharaoh riches, and then he
 Boasted about his might and majesty;
 In his whole life that monster felt no pain,
 So that to God that wretch could not complain—
 God gave to Pharaoh all of this world's wealth,
 But didn't grant grief, sorrow, and ill health.
 Pain is much better than the wealth men hoard
 For it leads you to pray hard to your Lord.
 To pray without pain means you are depressed;
 To pray in pain means that with love you're blest.
 Such love's expressed by holding your voice in,
 Remembering your actual origin,
 Which makes your voice pure when you finally pray:
 'O God, to Whom we turn, send help our way!'
 Even a dog's whine can have some attraction,
 For everyone through love finds some distraction:
 The dog of Sleepers in the Cave spurned carrion,
 Then feasted as the lofty kings' companion;
 Till Resurrection it drinks at that place,
 Without a bowl, water of mystic grace.*

200

205

Many look like that dog but have no name— 210
They down that drink in secret all the same.
Submit your life for one cup's sake, my son.
Strive and be patient till the battle's won.
Patience is not a difficult demand:
Patience, the key to joy, makes hearts expand.
Patience and prudence you'll need to ascend;
For prudence, patience is a needed friend.
Some plants are poisonous—think before you bite.
Prudence gave all the Prophets power and light.
Just worthless straw will jump with every breeze— 215
How can the wind make mountains feel unease?
From every side a monster calls you near:
'Brother, if you desire the path, come here!
I'll show the way and travel by your side,
For on the secret path I am the guide.'
He's not a guide and doesn't know the way—
Joseph, don't head towards the wolf today!*
Prudence will save you from a cheap seduction
By worldly traps which lead to your destruction.
This world is neither beautiful nor sweet, 220
But in your ear, like spells, it will repeat:
'Come as my guest—you're worthy of a throne.
My home's yours; you're just like one of my own.'
Prudence would say, 'My stomach feels unwell,'
Or 'This world's graveyard pains me more than hell,'
Or 'I've a headache which won't go away,'
Or 'I'm invited somewhere else today,'
Because the world gives only sweets that sting;
Many sores and discomfort they will bring.
If it gives gold coins to a fish, first look 225
And you will see it's all bait on a hook.
What is bestowed by tricksters who deceive?
Rotten walnuts are all that you'll receive;
Their rattling sound will lead your brain astray
And they think intellects are easy prey.
Your purse and kit-bag are all you require;
If you're Ramin, Vis is your sole desire.*

Your true Vis and beloved is your essence,
 While outward things are banes which form a nuisance.
 Prudence means, on receiving invitations, 230
 You don't think 'They love me' and buy flirtations.
 They are like hunters' whistles used as bait—
 The hunter blows, then, camouflaged, he'll wait.
 He'll even show a dead bird to pretend
 It is the mournful calling of a friend.
 Foolish birds think it is one of their kin
 And gather round—he will soon flay their skin.
 The bird with prudence is the sole exception—
 It isn't fooled by flattery and deception.
 Imprudence leads to much repentance, friend. 235
 The following will help you comprehend.

*How the villager tracked the townsman and invited
him with much pleading and flattery*

A townsman from among the urban gentry
 Had got to know a bumpkin from the country,
 And every time that country bumpkin could
 Visit he would stay in his neighbourhood:
 He would stay two or three months as a guest
 At work and at his home, where he would rest,
 And anything that he found necessary
 The townsman would provide without a fee.
 The bumpkin asked the townsman, 'Why not make 240
 A trip to my home village for a break?
 By God, bring all your children—we have room.
 In springtime you can watch the flowers bloom;
 In summer ripened fruit is such a sight,
 And I'll be at your service day and night.
 Bring your whole family and your retinue.
 Stay in our village for a month or two.
 In summer, all admire the countryside
 With farms and tulip fields on every side.'

The townsman promised, 'On the next occasion,' 245
But many years passed since that invitation.
Each year the bumpkin would repeat, 'Remember
Your promise! When will you come? It's December!'
The townsman made the same excuse each year:
 'A guest is visiting; I must stay here.
Next year, if I can I will find a way
 To take time off work for a holiday.'
The villager said, 'All my family
 Await yours, my good man, so eagerly.'
Just like a stork that bumpkin would appear 250
 And settle on that townsman's land each year.
That gentleman would generously spend
 His wealth to welcome him as a true friend;
The last time, for three months that man prepared
 So many feasts with no expenses spared.
The bumpkin asked the nobleman from shame:
 'How many promises? Is this a game?'
'I'm keen to come,' the townsman then replied,
 'But all depends on what God should decide.
A man is like a sailing-boat: each day 255
 He waits for God to send some wind his way.'
The villager would plead repeatedly:
 'Come with your children. View the scenery!'
He took his hand three times, to make him swear,
 Saying: 'Give me your word that you'll come there.'
After years of repeated invitations
 And promises with more procrastinations,
The townsman's children said: 'Dad, take a break!
 Even the moon and clouds have trips to make.
That poor man feels indebted still to you— 260
 You went to so much trouble and he knew.
He wants to try to pay you back as best
 He can, by hosting you there as his guest.
In secret, many times he let us know
 By saying, "Children, try to make him go!"'
The townsman said, '*Sebamayh*, this is true,
 But those you're kind to could be harming you!'*

Love is the seed which sprouts in the last instance;
 It might have rotted while kept at a distance.
 Companionship is a sharp sword one wields— 265
 Like winter, it will devastate all fields;
 Companionship is like the spring's arrival—
 It brings immeasurable growth and revival.
 Prudence is fearing bad fate: when you see it
 You'll have at least enough time then to flee it.
 The Prophet said, '*Prudence means being suspicious*';
 Each step could hide a new snare that is dangerous.
 The plain looks clear and level, but beware!
 Don't recklessly step on a deadly snare.
 'Where is the snare?' ask scoffing billy-goats— 270
 They'll fall into the snare up to their throats!
 You who demanded 'Where?', turn here your face—
 You saw the pasture, not the lurking-place.
 Unless it is a cunning hunter's snare,
 Would you expect to find a sheep's tail there?
 You who walk fearlessly above the ground,
 Look at the bones and skulls now strewn around.
 The next time that you pass the graveyard's gate
 Ask the bones to recount to you their fate,
 In order to observe and benefit 275
 From knowing how blind drunks fell in the pit
 Of their delusion. Look on carefully
 Or hold on to your cane if you can't see!
 Lacking prudence and guidance as your cane,
 Take as your guide an eye, or else remain
 Without that cane or eye and forced to hide
 Instead of standing there without a guide.
 Walk forward like the blind do, bit by bit,
 To dodge the dog and to avoid the pit.
 Trembling, each puts his foot down with great care, 280
 Fearful lest he should fall into a snare.
 You fled from smoke to fire, and for the sake
 Of scraps of food you're now food for the snake!

Story of the People of Sheba and how God's bounty to them
made them disobedient, and how misfortune visited them owing
to their disobedience and infidelity, and an explanation of the
virtue of gratitude and fidelity*

You've not heard Sheba's story, or instead
You have perceived just sounds from what was said.
The mountain can't perceive the echo's sounds,
Let alone reach the meaning it expounds;
It makes a clamour but lacks brain and ears—
When you fall silent its sound disappears.
God gave the People of Sheba rest and ease, 285
Palaces, orchards, and great luxuries;
Those wicked ones then showed ungratefulness
And proved much worse than dogs in faithfulness.
If at your door a dog receives food, then
It strives to please when passing by again;
It will stand by your door and serve as guard,
Even if circumstances make that hard—
It will stay by your door due to that food,
Deem choosing others sheer ingratitude.
And if a stray dog enters in a town, 290
The local dogs give it a dressing down,
Saying, 'Go back home! One must never part!
To pay back kindness you must pledge your heart.'
They'll bite it saying, 'Go, immediately.
Don't leave unpaid their generosity.'
You drank life-giving water at the door
Of mystics, till your eyes could see once more.
And you've gained gratitude and selflessness
With ecstasies from their door's huge largesse,
Yet, due to greed, you have since shunned their door 295
And wander bear-like now around each store—
You hope to find mere gravy-soaked fresh bread,
But all the donors' pots hold fat instead.
'Fat' means a soul which grows and is enlightened;
Thereby the plight of desperate men is lightened.

*How the afflicted would gather every morning at the door of Jesus'
cell in the hope of being healed through his prayer*

Jesus' cell's the Sufi's table-spread:

Don't shun that doorway, heed well what I've said!
From all around each morning people came,
Those dressed in rags, the blind ones and the lame,
To Jesus' cell's doorway in petition, 300
So, through his breath, he'd free them from affliction.
Once he had finished his own litany

That godly man would come outside and see
Weak and afflicted people all around,
Hoping his doorway is where cures are found.
'Afflicted people, all your needs,' he'd say,
'The Lord has granted mercifully today,
So walk without a struggle, properly,
To His forgiving generosity.'

Like camels once their knees have been untied 305
All suddenly stood up from far and wide
After his prayer, and they'd run self-assured
Back to their homes now they felt they'd been cured.

You've found your own afflictions similarly

And from the mystics gained the remedy:
Often your limp would disappear again,
Your soul would also be relieved from pain.
Tie up your legs and feet, forgetful one,
Lest you become lost just as they have done—
Forgetfulness and lack of gratitude 310
Made you forget that you've gained special food.
The way is blocked now to keep you apart,
Since you've made weary every mystic's heart.
Find them and beg forgiveness desperately
Just as a heavy cloud weeps bitterly,
So that their roses bloom in your direction
And ripened fruits burst forth for your selection.

Rush there now! Don't act worse than dogs, you knave,
You fellow slave of that dog in the cave!*

Since even dogs at times advise another, 315
 'Attach your heart to your first home, my brother.
Cling to the door where you first ate a bone
And pay the debt for kindness that was shown.'
They'll bite it till politely that dog goes
Back to its first home, where it thrives and grows:
They bark, 'Rude dog, return immediately!
Don't be your benefactor's enemy.
Just like the door-ring that's attached to it
Cling to that door, prepared, alert and fit.
Don't ever break the pledge of loyalty. 320
Don't spread disloyalty so thoughtlessly.
It's through their loyalty that dogs earned fame,
So don't shame them and give them a bad name.
For dogs, disloyalty's dishonourable
So how can you think it's allowable?
God too has taken pride in faithfulness:
*Who is more true than me to promises?**
Shunning God makes loyal men turn treacherous—
God's rights come first, ahead of all of us.
Even your mother, whose rights we all know, 325
Owes much to God for your own embryo:
Inside her body He created you;
In pregnancy, He gave her comfort too.
She felt you joined to her as a new part—
His providence pulled what was joined apart.
God's made a thousand mechanisms too,
So that your mother gives her love to you.
God's rights come first before your mother's, friend—
Only a donkey fails to comprehend!
Your mother and her nipples He created, 330
And it was due to Him your parents mated.
Lord, Whose beneficence lives on forever,
Yours is what I do and don't know together.
You've ordered us, 'Remember God! My rights
Do not expire with passing days and nights.

Recall the kindness I showed you that day—
In Noah's ark I kept you from harm's way,
That time when to your ancestors I gave
Sanctuary from the storms and each fierce wave;
Like fire, an all-consuming flood emerged; 335
Even the tops of mountains were submerged—
I saved you and did not desert you then,
Inside your ancestors among those men.
Now that you've risen to the top, could I
Strike you down, wasting all my work thereby?
Why mix with such unfaithful men today
And, through sick thoughts, like them fall far astray?
I am immune to infidelity
And negligence, so why think bad of Me?
Take all these sick thoughts back to where they came— 340
You're two-faced, joined with men who are the same.
You have found many comrades—where are they?
You know the truth is they have gone away.
To heaven soared your good friend of true worth;
The wicked one fell underneath the earth.
Now you remain here, helpless, in between
Like camp-fires where a caravan has been—
So seize the hem of one who can transcend
Dimensions like above and under, friend!
He doesn't rise like Jesus used to soar, 345
Nor, like Korah, fall into earth's deep core*—
He's with you here now, then beyond space when
You leave behind wealth to seek God again.
He can clean up the worst contaminations
And treats as faithful your abominations:
His scolding for bad actions is direction
To lead you from your flawed state to perfection.'

When you neglect your litanies, you feel
Contraction's* pain and heat, which prove it's real:
This is God's own corrective punishment, 350
Which says, 'Don't stray from our old covenant,

Lest that contraction turn into a chain,
Or shackles for your feet grow from your pain:
Your mental pain will soon be visible,
So don't ignore this as dismissible!
Contraction after sins may hurt you now—
At That Hour it will be a chain somehow!
If you block Our Remembrance from your mind
*We'll send a hard life and We'll make you blind.**
So when a thief takes someone's property 355
Contraction gives his heart pain inwardly:
'I wonder what that is?' the thief then says—
The victim's pain caused by your wicked ways.
When he stops feeling his contraction's shame
The winds of perseverance fan each flame.
The heart's contraction brings the thief's arrest
As every truth is soon made manifest.
The pangs turn into gaol and gibbets, so
The pang's the root from which such branches grow;
The root was hidden—now it's manifest: 360
Contraction is the root which sprouts the rest.
When the root's bad, strike it until it's gone
Or weeds will grow and ruin your fine lawn.
You've felt contraction—find the remedy,
Since from the roots grow branches of the tree;
You've felt expansion*—quickly water it
And share its fruit with each associate!

The remainder of the Story of the People of Sheba

The Sheba people lacked maturity,
Ungrateful for God's generosity.
As one example of their thanklessness, 365
They'd quarrel with their Lord, the Generous,
Saying: 'We don't need kindness now from You.
Why irritate us with kind things You do?
Do us a favour: take away Your kindness.
We don't want eyes, so cause us to have blindness!'

The Sheba people would then also say:

'Stay out! Give flams! Take beauty far away!

We don't want mansions, orchards with fine trees,

Beautiful girls, security and ease.

We don't like neighbours who reside too near,

370

Preferring deserts with wild beasts men fear.'

In summer, Man wants winter to be sent,

But if the winter comes he's not content,

For he is never pleased with his conditions,

Neither when poor nor when he has provisions.

*Ingratitude! May he be killed today!**

When he gains guidance he throws it away.

The self is like this—it is better dead:

*'Kill yourself!** God, the Most Sublime, has said.

It's a three-pointed thorn—how then can you

375

Prevent this one from pricking into you?

Burn the thorn with the fire of shunning lust!

Cling to the Friend's kind hands, which you can trust.

When they'd exceeded all the boundaries,

Saying: 'The plague is better than the breeze',

Their counsellors then warned the multitude

To save them from depraved ingratitude—

They aimed to kill them rather than take heed,

Sowing perverse ingratitude's bad seed.

The world seems very cramped when fate decrees,

380

And halva gives mouths painful injuries.

The Prophet said, '*Fate can reduce the size*

Of open space, block vision from your eyes.'

And fate can put upon your eyes a seal,

So they can't see the kohl salve which can heal.

Galloping riders raise much dust—that made

It hard for you to cry out for some aid.

Head for the horseman, not the dust! Keep running

Or you'll lose out due to that horseman's cunning.

'The one whom this fierce wolf devoured', God said,

385

'Saw its dust—why did it not cry for aid?

Could it not recognize the fierce wolf's dust?

Without such knowledge, why graze there with trust?

Sheep can smell dangerous wolves from yards away
And so they scamper every which way;
The lion's scent is known to a sheep's brain,
Which tells them to stop grazing on that plain,
But of wrath's lion's scent are you aware?
Turn back! Return to caution and to prayer!

That group gazed at the wolf's dust all the same; 390
They stayed until the wolf of terror came.
Enraged, it tore apart those sheep, whose eyes
Had closed to wisdom's shepherd and his cries.
They never came though he called frequently,
But threw dust in his eyes contemptuously,
Saying, 'We're better shepherds—go away!
We're each chiefs—we can't follow what you say.
We're not for God, but for the wolf to eat,
Fuel for the fire, not modesty's fine meat!' 395
There was a heathen pride inside their brains;
The crow squawked loudly over their remains.
Digging a pit designed for the oppressed,
They fell in and cried out, 'Alas!', distressed.
They tore the coats of Joseph, and each crime
Of theirs came back to haunt them in good time.
Who's Joseph? Your God-seeking heart of course,
Chained by your self, like prisoners, by force;
A Gabriel you have tied up with a tether
And now you tear his wings and pluck each feather.
You bring a roasted calf for it to eat 400
Or even straw, as if that is a treat,
Saying, 'Eat up! For us, this is some spread!' 405
Its nourishment is meeting God instead.
Due to this tribulation, grief, and pain,
You've made it turn to God now to complain:
'Save me from that old wolf, dear God!' it cries.
'The hour is near; have patience!' He replies,
'From them I will get justice now for you.'
Except God who can order justice? Who?

It says, 'My patience has worn thin, my Lord, 405
 Kept far from Your face, which I have adored.
 I'm Ahmad, left as captive of those Jews,
 Saleh in Thamud's gaol, due to their ruse.*
 Giver of joy to souls of prophets, please
 Kill me, or call me back, or come! Don't tease!
 Infidels can't bear missing You as well—
 "*Would that I'd been mere dust!*"* they loudly yell.
 The opposite sort even feel this way—
 How can Your own then bear to be away!
 God says, 'All right, pure one, but listen too. 410
 Be patient: patience is the best for you.
 It will be dawn soon. Hush! Don't wail and roar.
 I'll strive for you, and you need strive no more.

*Remainder of the story about the townsman going to the village
at the invitation of the villager*

Enough of this! Turn back! No longer roam!
 The bumpkin took the townsman to his home.
 Now put the Sheba people's tale aside.
 Tell how the townsman reached the countryside.
 The country bumpkin used some flattery
 To weaken his resolve most cleverly:
 Repeated pleading played tricks with his mind, 415
 Clear water turned thus to the murky kind,
 And due to his own children's powerful sway
 When they sang in approval, '*Let us play!*'*
 Like Joseph, whom, because of fate's selection
 '*Let's play!*'* stole from his father's close protection.
 That's gambling with one's life, not having fun;
 It's cunning, fraud, and lies rolled into one.
 If something drives you from your sweetheart, friend,
 Don't heed it, for it brings loss in the end;
 Though it should offer gains a hundredfold, 420
 Don't leave the treasure's owner for some gold!
 But heed how God rebuked some of the best—
 Companions of the Prophet failed this test:

In straitened circumstances, during prayer
They had a dream, and right away rushed there:
‘We void our prayers lest others step ahead
And all the discounts go to them instead.’
The Prophet, though, continued praying then
With one or two unwavering, yearning men.
God said, ‘By bargain discounts’ drums, how can 425
You be led far from this most holy man?
*For mere wheat you have scampered madly there,
And left the Prophet standing during prayer.*
In hope of wheat, you’ve sown a futile seed;
The Messenger of Truth you all should heed.
His company’s worth more than wealth and playing;
See who it is you left back there still praying!
To your greed was it not made manifest
That out of all providers I’m the best?’
He who’s placed nourishment in every grain, 430
Won’t let your trust in Him be all in vain.
For wheat’s sake you’ve abandoned that One who
Has sent the wheat down from the sky to you!

*The invitation of the falcon to the ducks to come from
water to the desert*

A falcon tells a duck, ‘Leave water, rise
To see the lovely plains with your own eyes.’
The wise duck tells him, ‘Falcon, disappear!
Water’s our fortress, where we’re safe from fear.’
The devil’s like the falcon—ducks, beware
Not to stray from your fortress to its snare.
Say to the falcon: ‘Go away! Turn back! 435
Keep your hands off us! Don’t you dare attack!
Infidel, keep your invitation—we
Will not fall for your clever sophistry.
This fort is ours, the lovely plains for you.
We turn your offer down—you keep that too.
While there is life, food’s found inside this world.
Where there’s an army banners are unfurled.’

The townsman gave profuse apologies,
 To answer that most wicked bumpkin's pleas:
 He said, 'I have important work to do— 440
 If I come now, it won't be then seen to.
 The king asked me to fix a situation;
 He hasn't slept and waits in expectation.
 I do not dare neglect the king's command;
 I can't fail him—you surely understand.
 An officer each morning and each night
 Asks me to show the way to put it right—
 Should I instead come to your village now
 And make the sultan fiercely knit his brow?
 How would I cool his anger and survive? 445
 To come means burying myself alive!
 Scores of excuses came thus from this man,
 But they weren't in accord with God's own plan.
 Though all the atoms in the world should plot,
 Next to decrees from heaven they're worth naught.
 How can the earth escape now from the sky,
 Or hide itself from it? Let's see it try!
 When something comes from heaven, earth has no
 Refuge, recourse, nor other place to go.
 If fire should rain down on it from the sun, 450
 It lies back and accepts what it has done;
 And if a massive deluge should rain down
 To flood and then destroy each single town,
 Like Job, earth would submit to its decrees,
 Saying, 'I'm captive—you do as you please.'
 You who are part of earth, don't disobey.
 When you see God's decree, don't turn away.
 '*We made you from mere dust,**' you've heard ring round,
 So act just like dust and don't turn around.
 God said, 'Look how I sow the seeds with care— 455
 It's lowly, then I raise it up from there.
 Adopt the practice of humility
 And I'll give you the most nobility.'
 Water moves from above below; from there
 It will evaporate back to the air.

Grain went down into earth originally,
Then, as corn ears, it sprang up suddenly.
Into the earth sink seeds from all the fruits
Then raise their heads up from their buried roots,
As from the heavens bounties all descend, 460
To serve as fruit for pure souls, my good friend;
When, with humility, they come down, then
They'll form a part of living, fearless men:
Such things turn into human qualities
And gaily soar beyond the Pleiades.
'We came down from the living world,' they say,
'And from this low state we've returned today.'
All atoms, moving or just stationary,
Say, '*We're returning to Him*'* constantly;
The *zehr** and praise by atoms, which are hidden, 465
Send constantly a clamour up to heaven.
The time a spell-like song was sung by fate
A bumpkin trapped a townsman in checkmate.
Despite his firm resolve, once he was mated
That journey led him to where grief was fated.
He had relied on his own firm resolve,
Something a tiny flood could still dissolve.
When fate looks out from heaven, you will find
Intelligent men can turn deaf and blind,
Fish will get flung about then by the sea, 470
And flying birds get snared so easily;
Genies will go back in their bottles then,
And Harut back to Babylon again;*
Only if you embrace fate can you flee
From fate and being slain by destiny.
Embrace your fate itself to find release;
Your clever tricks won't win you inner peace.

Story of the People of Zarwan and how they schemed to pick
the fruit in the orchards without being troubled by paupers*

You've read about the Zarwan nation—now
Why keep on seeking out schemes anyhow?

Scorpion-like men would scheme plots to deprive 475
 Paupers from food they needed to survive.
 These men conspired their wicked plots all night,
 Putting their heads together out of sight—
 They whispered secretly while sitting near
 To try to make sure that God wouldn't hear.
 Can clay conspire against the potter's art?
 Can one's own acts be hidden from the heart?
 'Does not Your Maker know your wish?' God said,*
 'Whether your prayer's sincere or false instead?'
How should those sneaking out one morning keep 480
 Hiding from One who knows where they will sleep?
He has already charted and can view
 The stations where he'll mount and dismount too.
 Unblock your ears of heedlessness and heed
 The separation felt by hearts that bleed!
 When you hear tales from such a person, you
 Are giving alms to that lovelorn one too.
 You'll hear about his heartache in this way,
 This noble spirit's trials while trapped in clay:
 That pure one's in a house that's smoke-filled here— 485
 Open a window now by giving ear.
 Then, it will breathe again, and struggles cease—
 That bitter smoke within will then decrease.
 Wayfarer, sympathize with us one time!
 If you are travelling to the Most Sublime.
 This dithering is like a gaol or wall,
 Not letting your entrapped soul move at all.
 One thing draws you this way, one thing that way—
 'I am the right path!' each of them will say.
 This is an obstacle on God's path, friend— 490
 You're blessed if your feet easily can ascend,
 Taking the right path with no vacillation.
 If you don't know the way, choose emulation:
 Track the deer's footprints left on this dry land
 And you'll eventually reach its sought musk gland.
 If you dare, brother, to walk now on fire
 By this means you can reach realms that are higher;

Why fear the ocean's waves or foam? You've heard
God say, '*Do not fear!*' to you—heed His word!
Remember '*Do not fear!*' when fear descends*— 495
He'll send bread since He's sent its basket, friends!
Fearless men will reserve for God their fear;
Anguish fills those who fail to circle here.

The townsman's journey to the village

The townsman got prepared then for the ride,
And his resolve flew to the countryside.
His wife and children started soon to pack,
Loading their baggage on the oxen's back,
Then rushed towards the village, clamouring:
'We'll taste their hand-picked fruit first like a king.
Our destination's a sweet pasture, where 500
We have a fine host who is kind and fair;
He begged us to go countless times, not once,
And planted saplings of benevolence.
From that fine host's huge stock we'll soon bring back,
For our own town's long winter, things we lack.
He'll give his orchard to us as a whole;
He'll make a place for us inside his soul.'
Hurry to profits or it will get late!
Intellect warns though, '*Don't yet celebrate!*
Seek profit which comes from the King of Kings; 505
God warns not to rejoice in other things.
Mildly rejoice in what God sends your way,
For gifts can all distract you far away.
Delight in Him, not in another thing—
They are like winter, while He is the spring.
Everything else attracts to fling you down,
Be it a throne, a kingdom, or a crown.
Rejoice in suffering, for that's union's snare—
Decline means progress in this strange affair.
Suffering's like treasure and its mine's your pain, 510
But teaching children this can be in vain:

When children hear the word 'game', they all race,

Just like wild asses, quickly to that place.

Blind donkeys, hidden traps, await this side.

Much blood's shed here with nowhere left to hide.

The bow stays hidden, but the arrows fly—

A hundred strike your youth now from the sky.

You must step in the heart's own plain today—

No opening is found in bodily clay.

The heart is where one can find safety, friend,

515

And rose gardens with fountains that don't end.

Night travellers turn towards the heart and go

Where you'll find trees and springs which freely flow.

Avoid the country—it makes fun of you.

It steals your wisdom's light and splendour too.

The Prophet warned: 'Countryside will prepare

Your intellect's grave if you settle there.'

Stay in the countryside one day or night,

For one whole month your wisdom won't feel right:

For one month you'll possess stupidity—

520

What can be reaped from wild hashish? Tell me!

Spend a whole month out there and you will find

You'll stay for ages ignorant and blind.

What's countryside? Shaikhs short of union's station

Who're still embroiled in proofs and imitation.

Near Universal Intellect, sense still

Is a blind donkey circling for a mill.

Set this aside—follow the tale's form here:

Leave the rare pearl and opt for a wheat ear;

If you can't go that way, then choose this way;

525

Take wheat if you can't take the pearl today.

Take its form, though it's crooked, my dear friend.

It leads to inner depths still in the end.

Each human's start is with a form, then later

The soul comes, which is beauty in behaviour;

Form is each fruit's original beginning—

After that comes sweet taste, its actual meaning.

At first, the tent is made, or else it's bought,

Then they invite a Turkman to that spot:

Your form's the tent, the Turkman is your essence; 530
Your form's a ship, the sailor is your essence.
End this talk for a moment, for God's sake,
And let the townsman's ass's bells all shake!

The merchant and his family go to the village

The townsman and his children packed their things
And galloped out on steeds, as if on wings,
So joyously across the countryside,
‘*Travel to gain!*’ they’d shout as they would ride.
The moon becomes, through travelling, Kaykhosrow*—
How else could it become like him and grow?
Travel can turn a pawn into a queen 535
And bring to Joseph outcomes he’d foreseen.*
Their faces all got sunburned then by day;
By night, through stars they worked out the right way.
To them, the ugly route looked very nice;
Love of the country made it paradise.
Sweet-lipped ones can make bitterness turn sweet;
The rosebush makes thorns seem a lovely treat.
Bitter plants, through the Loved One, turn to dates.
Houses seem bigger with the right housemates.
Many a fine youth bore sharp thorns, so soon 540
He’d win a rose-cheeked girl fair as the moon.
Many a porter broke his back, all for
The moonfaced sweetheart whom he valued more.
The blacksmith made his face black, so by night
He’d earn a kiss from one whose face is white.
The trader stands till nightfall in his store,
Because a lovely figure fills his core;
The merchant travels by the land and sea
Through love for one who stays home patiently.
Whoever longs for something that is dead 545
Really hopes for a living thing instead.
The carpenter will focus on mere wood,
So for his sweetheart he’ll make something good.

Struggle then for a living lover too,
 One who won't die within a day or two.
 Don't choose a base man as companion—
 His friendship's borrowed, not to count upon.
 Where now's your closeness to your parents, friend?
 Closeness to anyone but God must end,
 And this includes your wet-nurse and your tutor 550
 As no one else is truly your supporter—
 Your love of milk and nipples didn't last,
 Nor your dislike of school once in the past.
 That was like sunlight shining on a door,
 That trace returned back to the sun once more.
 When sunlight's rays fall on things from above
 Then those things stir within you passionate love.
 Your love for such existents, truth be told,
 Arises from God's covering them with gold.
 But, when gold leaves them, copper's what will stay— 555
 With senses sated you'll throw that away.
 Step back now from its gilded form! Speak less,
 In ignorance, of its attractiveness
 Because that beauty's borrowed, and you'll see
 It hides an ugly, foul reality.
 Gold flees from base coin to the mine, its source—
 You now should follow gold and take its course.
 Light rays flee from the wall back to the sun—
 Head to the sun, which is the perfect one.
 Drink water only from the skies, since you 560
 Have not found in canals what will stay true.
 Wild wolves are lured by sheep's tails and don't know
 About the source which formed them down below.

They rushed, deluded, to the countryside,
 Imagining gold was neatly wrapped inside.
 They danced and laughed away so merrily
 Whirling around each water-wheel they'd see.
 Whenever they saw birds which flew ahead,
 Eagerness for the village filled each head.

And they would fondly kiss each person's face 565
Coming towards them from that sought-out place:
'You have seen our beloved's face,' they'd say,
'So you're as dear as our own eyes today.'

*How Majnun petted that dog which lived in
Layli's neighbourhood**

Just like Majnun who'd pet a dog and kiss
And croon then over it—they'd act like this.
Majnun would humbly circle it and pour
Rose syrup in its bowl from his own store.
'Majnun!' a person watching called one day,
'Why do you always act so mad this way?
Dog's muzzles touch filth everywhere they go, 570
And they lick their own genitals below.'
He gave a long list of the dog's flaws too—
About wise men fault-finders have no clue.
Majnun replied, 'You just see form and size.
Come here and view beyond those through my eyes!
For it's a talisman sealed by the Lord—
It is the guard-dog watching Layli's road.
Look at its soul—that dog can recognize!
Its choice of where to live shows that it's wise.
It is the blest dog of the cave to me.* 575
It shares in all my grief and agony.
That dog of her lane—I'd not give one hair
From it to lions, though trapped in their lair.
Lions are slaves to Layli's dogs, so I
Think there's no point in saying more. Goodbye!
If from mere outward form you can transcend,
You'll reach such heavenly gardens, my good friend.
When you've smashed your own form, then this will bring
Knowledge of breaking forms of everything.
You'll smash then every form that still awaits— 580
Like Ali, you'll dislodge those Khaybar gates.*
Form duped that townsman with a simple brain,
For he accepted words that were all vain,

And rushed with joy to flattery's own snare
 As birds rush to the bait that tempts them there:
 The bird deemed it a gift like some fine seed,
 But it was not a gift—it was sheer greed.
 Little birds, lusting for the bait, feel joy
 And fly towards what is a mere false ploy.
 That townsman's joy if I were to relate, 585
 Wayfarer, I fear that I'd make you late.
 I'll be brief: when a village came to view
 It was the wrong one—he set off anew.
 Village to village, he went round and round,
 Not knowing where the right one might be found.
 Without a guide, a two-day trip will take
 A hundred years, so don't make this mistake.
 Those on the Hajj without a proper guide
 Fall low like these fools who'd grown stupefied.
 Without a teacher, one took up a craft— 590
 His work was so poor everybody laughed.
 From East to West, to be born is so rare
 If there aren't any parents over there.
 A man who earns grows wealthy, but it's rare
 For someone to find treasure lying there.
 The Prophet's body was like soul—where can
 We find one whom *Kind God taught the Qur'an*?*
 'He taught with pen'* as intermediary
 To all attached to body generously.
 The greedy are forbidden this, my son, 595
 So slow down! Only greedy fools would run.
 The journey's toil drained that man from the town
 Like landbirds falling where they could soon drown.
 All of them grew sick of the countryside
 And sweet-talk from that bumpkin with such pride.

*The townsman and his group reach the village, but the bumpkin
 is nowhere to be found*

When finally they stopped, a month had passed,
 All food consumed, steeds breathing now their last.

That evil bumpkin had deliberately
Continued to make them face difficulty.
By day he'd hide his face from them, lest they 600
Fed from his orchard and declined to pay.
A face so full of evil and cruel lies
Should be kept far away from good men's eyes!
Demons are perched like flies on such vile faces,
As if they are the guards of sought-out places.
When you should see that face they'll set on you—
Don't look! At least don't smile back if you do.
Concerning such a face have you not read—
*'We'll drag him by the forelock!'** God has said.
They asked and found that man's house finally, 605
Then hurried to his door like family.
At once the door was bolted from inside,
Making the townsman mad at what he'd tried.
It wasn't now the time to get aggressive:
Trapped down a well, there's no point being abrasive.
They stayed there by the door for five full days,
Freezing at night, then burned by the sun's rays.
Their staying wasn't mere stupidity—
They had naught left: it was necessity.
When forced, good men might join those fit for hell; 610
If starved, lions eat carcasses as well.
The townsman saw him and called out, 'Hello!
This is my name and I am so-and-so.'
He would reply, 'Maybe? I can't be sure
Who you are—dirty foe or friend who's pure.'
The townsman then would say, 'I see a brother,
Like at the last hour, fleeing from another!
I am the one from whose rich table you
Ate all the fine food that you wanted to.
I bought those goods that sunny afternoon; 615
A secret shared with more than one spreads soon:
All know about the kindness shown by me—
Past dinner guests should show humility.'
He answered, 'Nonsense! Why is it you came?
I don't know where you're from or what's your name.'

A violent storm began on the fifth night—
Even the sky was stunned at such a sight.
The townsman, who could not take any more,
Screamed, 'Call your master!' as he banged the door.
After a hundred calls, the man came out: 620
'Gentleman, tell me what you've come about.'
'I now renounce each single previous claim
And all that I presumed when I first came.
Five years of suffering I've felt these five days,
Standing unsheltered from the sun's hot rays.'
A sole injustice from a friend or brother
Is worse than millions of them from another,
Because the victim won't expect injustice
From those who normally would show him kindness.
Some acts seem harsher therefore to men's eyes 625
Because they are both wrong and a surprise.
He added, 'Sun whose grace now fades from view,
Shed my blood—I'll say it's allowed to you.
This rainy night give us a place to stay
And gather your reward on Judgment Day.'
'There is the gardener's shelter,' he replied.
'At night he usually stands as guard inside,
Carrying bow and arrow just in case
The wolf should wander up towards that place.
If it's of use, tonight call it your own; 630
If not, find somewhere else! Leave me alone!'
'I would be grateful if you should bestow
That place to me with arrows and a bow.
I won't sleep but I'll guard your vines instead,
And if the wolf shows up, I'll shoot it dead.
You two-faced man, don't leave us here again
On ground that's sludgy due to pouring rain!
The townsman and his family then went
To that cramped hovel which they had been lent.
Like piles of locusts, they were forced to lie 635
Together lest a huge flood should pass by.
They cried, 'O God!' throughout that desperate night,
'This is what we deserve. It serves us right.'

This is what's earned if you befriend the base
Or treat such people courteously with grace.
This is what's earned by those who from sheer lust
Should stop revering noble people's dust:
Licking the dust that pure men leave behind
Earns more than vines of vulgar men you'll find;
Following mystics who're enlightened brings 640
More gain than if you lord it over kings.
Apart from drum rolls, from the kings on earth
You won't gain anything that has real worth.
Next to the spirit, townsmen seem like muggers.
So what are bumpkins? Naught but worthless failures.
This is what's earned when you don't use your brain—
You hear the ghoul close by, yet you remain.
The time that true repentance takes possession
Of your own heart, there's no point in confession.

With bow and arrow in his hand, held tight, 645
He sought the wolf out, looking left then right.
The wolf had hypnotized him; he'd search there,
But of his inner wolf stay unaware.
Each gnat became a wolf, and every flea,
So they could bite now much more viciously.
There was no chance to drive the vile gnats back
From fear the cruel wolf might launch an attack.
The danger of the wolf caused consternation
As well as fear of more humiliation
By that cruel bumpkin on that chilly night— 650
They gnashed their teeth while their souls burst with fright.
The figure of a wolf then suddenly
Appeared behind a hilltop they could see.
That townsman put an arrow in his bow
And shot the animal down like a foe.
It farted loudly as it slowly fell—
This made the bumpkin shake his fists and yell:
'You wretch, that was my ass's colt! He died!'
'No, it's the wolf,' the townsman then replied.

'It has the features of a wolf; you can
 Observe this clearly from its form, good man.' 655
 'The fart it let off told me it was mine;
 It is like telling water from good wine—
 You've killed my ass colt claiming you're a friend!
 May you be cursed with farting that won't end!'
 He said, 'Observe more carefully. It's night—
 Distinctive features are now veiled from sight.
 Things look strange and one's sight's inaccurate;
 At night, not all men's sight is adequate.
 It's night with clouds and rain—and all these three 660
 Combined cause visual inaccuracy.'
 'For me it is a clear day all the same:
 My ass colt's arse—from there that loud fart came.
 Among a thousand, I can tell that fart
 The way that travellers tell their bags apart.'
 The townsman leapt up, unperturbed, and held
 The bumpkin by his collar, as he yelled:
 'Idiot thief, you're lying or you're blind!
 You've smoked hashish and opium both combined.
 How can you tell your ass's fart at night 665
 When you can't recognize me in the light!
 He who, at midnight, easily can tell
 His colt, can recognize a friend as well.'

You act like mystics in ecstatic highs,
 Throwing dust in munificence's eyes,
 Claiming: 'I've lost myself! I'm unaware!
 My heart lets none but God to enter there.
 What I ate yesterday I can't recall;
 My heart loves deep perplexity—that's all.
 I'm both sane and insane through God—it's bliss, 670
 And I'm excused when selfless just like this.'
 Men who drink date wine or eat carrion can
 Still be excused by law despite the ban.*
 If drunk or high, one can't divorce or trade:
 One's like a child, absolved—one's debts are paid.

A hundred vats could not cause drunkenness
Like that from scent blown from His holiness.
The horse is legless—it won't rise at all.
How can such men be held responsible?
Who would put on an ass colt heavy loads 675
Or try to teach the Devil Persian odes?
The load is taken off when it is lame,
As God has said, '*For blind men there's no blame.*'*
'I see through God and of myself I'm blind,
So I'm absolved of sins of every kind.'
You boast of dervishhood and selflessness,
And holler like one drunk in God, no less,
Saying, 'I cannot now tell land from sky'—
God's jealousy's test, though, proves that you lie.
Your ass colt's fart has brought you such deep shame, 680
Showing you still exist despite your claim.
This is how God can put to shame a fraud;
This is how fleeing prey is caught by God.
A million tests await for anyone
Who claims, 'I am the captain!' Heed this, son!
Even if simple men can't understand,
The adepts know what proof they should demand.
A wretch may claim to be a tailor, but
The king will throw before him silk to cut:
'Make a fine robe from this that's bound to stun!' 685
This test will show him up to everyone.
If one did not test bad men, on that day
Effete men would seem Rostams in the fray!
Even if they wear armour, one soft blow
Will make them feeble captives of the foe.
A breeze can't shake one drunk in God awake
When he won't wake for the Last Day's blast's sake.*
The wine of God is true and strong, my friend—
You've drunk mere yoghurt and wish to pretend.
Jonayd or Bayazid you claim to be:* 690
'Drunk, I can't tell an axe now from a key.'
Through fraud, how will you hide sloth, lust, and greed?
Trickster, when will you finally take heed?

You claim to be Mansur Hallaj, and set
 Aflame the cotton of the friends you get: *
 'I can't tell Omar and Bu Lahab apart, *
 But still at night I know my ass's fart!'

Only a donkey would believe that's true,
 Making itself both blind and deaf for you.

Don't claim you're travelling on the mystic way— 695
 You spoil the path. Rubbish is all you say.
 Fly back from fraud to intellect. Don't lie!
 How can false wings enable you to fly?

Your claim to be God's lover is an act,
 For you make love with demons now in fact.

On Resurrection, lovers shall be tied
 With those they love and then be brought outside—
 You now act drunk and witless—tell me how?
 Where is your wine? You're drinking our blood now.

I do not recognize you—go away! 700
 'I am love-crazed like Bohlul,' you still say.
 Nearness to God is just a dream you claim;
 To you the plate and potter are the same.

You don't know that the saint's proximity
 Means miracles and powerful majesty:
 David turned iron to wax*—please understand
 Wax turns to iron if placed in your vile hand.

God is near all and gives them food to eat;
 Love's revelation comes to His elite.

Proximity's of various kinds, my son— 705
 Mountains and goldmines feel rays from the sun,
 But mines of gold have a proximity
 That's never fathomed by the willow tree;

Dry and fresh branches both are near the sun—
 How should the sun be veiled from either one?
 The fresh branch bears fruit, even if no nearer—
 It feeds you ripe fruit, so it is superior.

From nearness to it, branches that are dry
 Gain nothing—they will quickly rot and die.
 Don't be the kind of drunkard who invents it— 710
 On sobering up from his act, he regrets it.

No, be a drunkard whose wild drunkenness
Makes intellectuals feel so envious.
O cat, you've caught a mouse that's now half-dead—
With powerful wine one catches lions instead.
You've drunk the empty glass of fantasy—
Don't reel like those who're drunken mystically.
Just like a drunk you're staggering about—
You're in this realm—you've not found a way out.
The time you find a path that leads you yonder 715
Swing your head side to side, then dance and holler.
You're fully down here—not another breath!
Don't agonize as if you've tasted death.
If Khezzr-souled ones who don't fear death should state
They don't know creatures, that's appropriate.
You salivate for what's not really there—
You fill your bag of selfhood with hot air,
Then, with one prick, you'll empty and fall flat—
May no wise body get as fat as that!
In winter, you make pots from snow, but they 720
Will not last, holding water, for one day.

*How the jackal fell into the dyeing vat, became
multi-coloured, and claimed to the other jackals that
it was a peacock*

A jackal strayed into the dyeing vat
And stayed in there for such a long time that
Its skin was dyed. When finally it came out,
'I'm paradise's peacock!' it would shout.
Its coloured fur had gained a pretty splendour
And sunlight would reflect upon each colour.
It saw itself as golden, red, and green,
And stepped out proudly, eager to be seen.
The others asked, 'What has got into you? 725
You've grown deluded and exultant too.
Due to this glee, you're snubbing us for once—
Where did you find this twisted arrogance?'

One of the jackals asked, 'Are you a fraud?
 Or are you really feeling bliss through God?'
 To climb the pulpit you have used deceit;
 Your babble saddens everyone you meet.
 You've not gained any ardour, though you've tried,
 And so you've acted shamelessly and lied.
 Ardour is for a Prophet and God's Friend; 730
 Impudence suits impostors who pretend,
 To draw men's eyes towards themselves with pride,
 Then claim, 'We're blissful!' though they're glum inside.

*How a boaster greased his lips and moustache every morning
 with the skin of a sheep's tail, and came out to his associates,
 saying: 'I've eaten such-and-such!'*

A poor man found a sheep's tail, which he used
 To grease his moustache, to leave men confused:
 He mingled with the wealthy, whom he'd tell:
 'I've feasted at a party—can't you tell?'
 He'd then touch his moustache as if to say:
 'There's grease on my moustache—all look this way!
 This is the proof that what I claim is true; 735
 The food I ate was rich and tasty too.'
 His stomach would in silence then reply:
 'God ruin all the schemes of those who'd lie!
 Your boasting has engulfed me now in flames.
 May your moustache be pulled out for your claims!
 Beggar, your ugly boasts are blocking me
 From aid from generous men with sympathy;
 If you had shown the ailment and not played,
 By now a doctor's cure would have been made.'
 God said, 'Don't move perversely ears or tails; 740
*The truthfulness of truthful men prevails.**
 Wet-dreamer, don't sleep curled up in that state!
 Show what you have! *Be steadfast and be straight!**
 Admit your flaws or else at least refrain
 From boasts—your tricks will kill you. They're your bane.

Even if you've got hold of gold, stop talking!

Touchstones await along the path you're walking,
And there are, for these touchstones, more tests too

To make sure that their own state's always true.

'From birth to death,' God said, and thus made clear, 745

*'Each one of them is tested twice a year.'**

Test upon test awaits, my friend—don't rest

So chuffed that you have passed the smallest test.

*How Bal'am ben Ba'ur felt secure for God had tested him and he
had passed well*

Bal'am Ba'ur and Satan both became

Debased at the last test that finally came.

This man craves wealth, as his claims indicate;

His belly slams his moustache, though, irate,
Saying: 'Show what he's hiding with that face.

He has consumed me—God, give him disgrace!

All of his body parts are now his foes— 750

He boasts of spring while they feel winter's woes.'

Boasting repels the kindness men might show,

Severs the branch from where it used to grow.

Be silent, if you can't say what is true—

You'll then see mercy and enjoy it too.

His belly now was his moustache's foe;

It prayed in secret so he wouldn't know:

'O Lord, disgrace this braggart who is base.

Bring generous people's kindness in his place!'

An answer came then to the belly's prayer; 755

Its neediness's fire produced signs there.

'Though you be sinners and idolaters,'

God said, 'I answer all petitioners.

Hold steadfastly to prayer and weeping too,

As, from the ghoul, this will deliver you.'

His belly pledged itself to God that day—

A cat then snatched that man's sheep's tail away.

His family chased that cat to no avail.

Fear of being scolded turned that man's child pale;

He came towards his father in the crowd, 760
 And caused him to lose face by saying aloud:
 'That sheep's tail that you use each break of day
 To grease your lips and moustache in that way—
 A cat came by and snatched it suddenly;
 I chased it, but it was too fast for me.'
 Those present laughed from sheer amazement then,
 And pity in them was soon moved again—
 They each invited him to eat his full,
 Sowing, in his soil, seeds so merciful.
 When from the nobles he saw honesty, 765
 He shunned pride to become Truth's devotee.

*How the jackal which fell into the dyeing vat pretended
to be a peacock*

That multi-coloured jackal came one day
 And tapped a critic's earlobe twice, to say:
 'Everyone, look at me and all my colours.
 An idol like me dazzles idol-lovers!
 Just like a rosebush, I am beautiful
 And colourful—bow down, be dutiful!
 Behold my splendour, radiance, hue and glory!
 "Pride of the world", "Pillar of faith"—they suit me.*
 I'm now the theatre of God's grace for you, 770
 The Tablet where divinity's shown too.*
 Jackals, don't call me "jackal" any more!
 Have you seen one as beautiful before?'
 Those jackals gathered, moths to a bright flame—
 To be their candle was that jackal's aim:
 'What fitting name can we call you? Tell us,
 Peacock, with Jupiter's auspiciousness!'
 They then said, 'Peacocks of the soul display
 Their tails inside the rose garden, don't they?
 So can you do that too?' He answered, 'No, 775
 To reach Mena there's a long way to go.*'
 'Can you squawk like a peacock then instead?'
 He answered, 'No.' 'You're not one!' they all said.

'The peacock's cloak comes from beyond the skies—
How can you gain that through false claims and lies?'

*Comparison of Pharaoh and his claim to divinity with
that jackal who claimed to be a peacock*

Like Pharaoh, proudly, you now wish to pass
Lord Jesus, but you fly just like an ass!
Pharaoh was a vile jackal's child like that,
But he fell into status and wealth's vat:
Whoever saw his wealth and status bowed; 780
He bought fake worship from those who'd been wowed—
That ragged beggar got intoxicated
By the stunned looks of those who had prostrated.
Wealth is a snake which has a deadly poison;
Accepting people's worship is a dragon.
Pharaoh, don't act as if you've majesty.
Jackal, don't act like peacocks. We can see!
If peacocks should encounter you one day,
You'll seem a fool—no feathers to display!
Moses and Aaron were like peacocks who 785
Displayed their feathers straight in front of you.
Your ugliness and shame were brought to sight
And you fell head first from a lofty height.
The touchstone showed that all your coin was base—
The lion's gone; a dog's now in its place.
You ugly, wolfish dog, do not put on
A lion's skin through greed—you fool no one!
The lion's roar will test you, for you lied—
A lion's semblance with a dog inside.

*Exegesis of 'You will know them through the
corruption of their speech'**

God told the Prophet, 'Vile hypocrisy
Has a clear sign that you'll see easily:

A hypocrite,* though huge and causing terror,
 Has warped speech that will spare us all from error.⁷
 When you buy earthenware pots, customer,
 You test them out, to see which you prefer—
 Why do you tap them first on the outside?
 To check there are no cracks on the inside.
 A cracked one sounds distinct from one that's not—
 This is the herald stood before the pot:
 The sound tells you about its true condition;
 Verbs show the verbal noun's own definition.
 The subject of a trial has filled my mind—
 About Harut's tale trials always remind:

795

*Story about Harut and Marut and their boldness
 during the trials from God*

I've shared a little of this tale before,*
 One small tale from a hundred thousand more.
 I wished to speak of truths deemed mystical,
 But I've been held back by an obstacle.
 A little of it will be told again—
 One leg of a huge mammoth we'll explain.
 You must heed Harut and Marut's own story
 Then we'll be servants of your face's glory!
 They got drunk through observing God; they'd view
 With awe the marvels that the Lord would do.
 Such drunkenness comes slowly, so imagine
 Drunkenness caused by mystical ascension!
 That drunkenness came from his snare's small bait—
 Imagine at His feast what fills each plate!
 The pair were drunken and freed from the noose,
 So they gave screams that lovers can produce.
 One test and ambush still stood in the way—
 Its wind blew mountains, as if straw, away!
 This turned them upside down despite their wings—
 How can a drunk be conscious of such things?

800

805

To him a ditch and prairie are no different;
He'd stroll in pits and ditches too, indifferent.
The goat runs up the mountain's slope, to find
Some food that's safe to eat with peace of mind.
While gathering some grass it suddenly
Will witness a new trick from God's decree:
It glances at the mountain opposite 810
And sees a she-goat who seduces it.
This goat gets bleary-eyed and starts to run,
Leaving its mountain for the other one.
To this drunk goat, it's less than going round
A drain-hole which in a small hut is found:
Thousands of yards to it seem like one yard—
Drunkenly, it thinks jumping there's not hard,
But when it jumps, it falls between the pair—
Two mountains with a gap, and no net there.
From hunters to the mountain it had fled, 815
But its own sanctuary now will leave it dead.
Between the mountains, hunters sit and wait
For God to bring about His wondrous fate—
Hunting of goats is like this usually,
Otherwise they'd elude their enemy.
Though Rostam had great honour and stood tall,
Lust would ensnare him still and make him fall—
From lust's strong stupor you must break away!
Observe it in the camel clear as day!
Know also that this worldly drunkenness 820
Compared with that of angels is worth less:
That drunkenness would stun this weaker kind—
Why should the angels pay it any mind?
Until you have drunk pure, sweet water too,
Briny water's the sweetest kind to you.
One drop of heaven's wine would tear away
Your soul from this world's wine they serve today.
Imagine then the angels' drunkenness,
And spirits made pure by the Glorious,
Whose hearts, at just one whiff, have all been hurled 825
Towards that wine, smashing vats of this world,

In contrast to those kept far, who breathe sighs
 Like infidels in graves, all blocked from eyes,
 Those who've lost hope of both worlds and have sown
 Thorns ceaselessly, to spread woe like their own.
 Harut and Marut drunkenly then said,
 'We'd rain like clouds on land, and then we'd spread,
 In this place of injustice, equity,
 Devotion, justice, and pure loyalty.'
 The Lord's decree said, 'Stop!' when they spoke thus, 830
 'The traps in front of you are numerous.
 Don't boldly head to deserts full of pain.
 Don't blindly go to Kerbala's dry plain.
 For due to bones and hair from all the dead,
 A traveller's feet can't find the path ahead:
 Bones, guts, and hair fill the whole road, my friend.
 Wrath's sword's brought many things there to their end.'
 'My servants walk serenely!' God has said,
 'Since they're connected to my special aid.
 Who'd walk upon thorns when his feet are bare 835
 Without a pause to think and to beware?'
 Their ears were closed—God spoke to no avail—
 Then blocked up by hot-headedness's veil.
 All closed their eyes and ears except the few
 Who'd fled their selves and had been born anew.
 What opens eyes but sheer grace from above?
 What pacifies your rage apart from love?
 May no one ever toil and forgo rest
 Without God granting triumph. God knows best.

*Story about Pharaoh's dream of Moses' arrival
and his thoughts about how to avoid this*

Pharaoh's work was without God's aid, and so 840
 It came apart however much he'd sew.
 He had one thousand court astrologers,
 Skilled sorcerers, and dream-interpreters.

He dreamed that Moses would be born that year
And then destroy that kingdom he held dear,
And so he asked them, 'What can I now do
To stop this dream I had from coming true?'
They answered, 'We'll together form a plan
Preventing his birth like a highwayman.'
Before the night on which his birth was due, 845
These men thought then the best course to pursue
Was bringing to the public square that day
The royal throne and footstool on display,
Proclaiming, 'Welcome, Israelites, the king
Summons you from where you've been lingering,
So he can show to you, unveiled, his face
And treat you well, to earn from God His grace.'
Those captives weren't allowed, at his insistence,
To look at him before, except from distance;
If they should come across him travelling round, 850
By law they'd have to lie and face the ground:
The law decreed, 'No captive is allowed
To see the ruler's face of which we're proud.
Whenever they should hear his heralds call,
Each has to put his face against a wall.
And if one sees him, he's a criminal—
He'll earn the harshest punishment of all.'
Each Israelite longed secretly inside
To see that face—Man craves what he's denied.

*How they summoned the Israelites to the main square
as a trick to prevent the birth of Moses*

The heralds called, 'Head to the public square, 855
For you may see the king and his gifts there!'
On hearing these words, every Israelite
Thirsted and yearned to see this longed-for sight.
They swallowed all the lies and planned to go,
So each prepared himself for the big show.

A story

A cunning Mongol once said suddenly:

‘I’m seeking an Egyptian, so help me!

Bring the Egyptians here, so that I may

Identify the one I want today.’

When each one came ‘It’s not you,’ he’d declare.

860

‘Go and sit in that corner over there.’

All of them were assembled in this fashion,

Thus they tricked then beheaded each Egyptian.

Such is the bad luck for those who don’t care

To heed the one who gives the call to prayer:

Those men were tempted by the trickster’s call—

Take care, well-guided one, that you don’t fall!

And heed the cries of poor and needy men

Lest your ears heed the trickster’s cries again.

Though beggars be both greedy and uncouth,

865

Among such gluttons seek the men of Truth.

Pearls are among the pebbles; just the same

Glory is found when one has gone through shame.

The Jewish men began to stir at dawn,

And rushed out to see what was going on.

Pharaoh, through cunning, lured them to that place

And there he showed them all his beaming face.

He gave gifts and showed friendship to each man,

Then promised them the world, as rulers can.

Finally, he said, ‘By God, I wish tonight

870

You’d all sleep in the square until first light.’

They answered, ‘If you wish, we all will stay

For a whole month—we’d dutifully obey.’

*How Pharaoh returned from the square to the city, glad to
have separated the Israelites from their wives on Moses'
night of conception*

The king returned so pleased with the deception:
'They're far from wives on the night of conception.'

Emran, his treasurer, was present too,

Attending Pharaoh as companions do.

Pharaoh told him, 'Emran, sleep by the gate.

Don't dare go near your wife to copulate!

'I'll sleep at this gate,' Emran then replied,

875

'And think of how to keep you satisfied.'

For Emran was as well an Israelite,

Though he was very dear in Pharaoh's sight.

He never thought Emran would disobey

And do what would cause him the most dismay.

*Emran makes love to the mother of Moses and she
becomes pregnant*

Pharaoh left, Emran slept then by the gate.

His wife at midnight came, though it was late.

She kissed his lips and lay down, pressed so tight

Against him, rousing him from sleep that night.

Emran woke up and saw his own wife there

880

Kissing him fondly in the open air.

Emran asked, 'Why did you now come to me?'

She said, 'Out of desire and God's decree.'

Romantically, he pulled her to his side

And didn't try at all to stem the tide:

They made love, and when he ejaculated,

'This is no trivial thing,' he intimated.

'A spark was born when iron was struck on stone

To burn the Pharaoh and all he might own.

I'm cloud, you're earth: Moses was cultivated.

885

God is the King and we've both been checkmated.

Wife, checkmate, and success come from the King,
 Not us, so don't blame us for anything.
 What Pharaoh feared most somebody would do
 Happened the moment I made love to you.'

*After they have made love, Emran advises his wife to
 pretend she hasn't seen him*

Don't say a word about our time last night
 Or else we'll suffer from an awful plight.
 The outcome in the end will be made clear
 Just as its signs are shown already here.
 Suddenly from the area of the square
 Loud human cries began to fill the air.
 The Pharaoh rushed out barefoot, terrified:
 'What's all the noise that I could hear inside?
 What uproar is it that we all can hear
 And which would fill the demons too with fear?'
 Emran said, 'Long live Pharaoh! Every Jew
 Is celebrating surely due to you.
 Your gifts have filled them with such happiness,
 That they now clap and dance, delirious.'
 'Maybe that is the case,' Pharaoh then said,
 'But it brings deep suspicions to my head.'

890

895

Pharaoh is scared of the uproar

'This tumult has disturbed my soul,' said Pharaoh,
 'And aged me through its bitter grief and sorrow.'
 Pharaoh paced to and fro all night so torn
 Like women hours before their child is born.
 He kept on saying, 'Emran, all these screams
 Are troubling me and I will have bad dreams.'
 Poor Emran lacked the courage to confess
 That he had had sex that night nonetheless,
 That his dear wife had come to meet him here,
 So that the tale of Moses would appear.

900

The time a prophet is conceived his star
Shines in the sky and is seen from afar.

*The appearance of Moses' star in the sky and the astrologers'
shrieking in the square*

Moses' star appeared then in the sky,
Confounding Pharaoh and the schemes he'd try.
When day broke he told Emran, 'Go, find out
What all that uproar from the square's about!'
Emran rode there and asked, 'Why do you bawl?
Last night the Pharaoh couldn't sleep at all.'
Astrologers with heads bare and clothes torn 905
Kissed the ground solemnly like men who mourn.
Their voices too were hoarse like mourning men
From moaning and lamenting too much. Then
Each pulled his beard out, smeared his face with mud,
And gashed his head, as his eyes filled with blood.
He said, 'Is all well? What's all this commotion?
Does this year show already an ill omen?'
They begged forgiveness and said, 'Noble sir,
Fate's hand has made us all its prisoner.
Fortune has dimmed, as all our efforts failed— 910
Pharaoh's foe was conceived, so he's prevailed.
Last night that boy's star could be seen, so we
Are filled with terror and anxiety.
The prophet's star shone in the sky so clear,
While we all wept tear after star-like tear.'
Happy inside, but acting sad instead,
Emran screamed, 'All is lost!' and beat his head.
He acted stern and angry, as if serious,
And showed a temper like one who's delirious.
He spoke like a barbarian, with no care 915
About expletives though crowds gathered there,
Pretending he was bitter and dismayed—
Such fine backgammon moves Emran now played.
He faced the crowd, 'Have you tricked our king, men?
When will your treachery and greed stop? When?

You lured down here the ruler of our nation
 And now you've caused him deep humiliation.
 You said, with hand on heart as guarantee:
 We will release you from anxiety.'
 The king heard this and started then to bawl: 920
 'Traitors, without delay I'll hang you all!
 I made myself a laughing-stock for you,
 And squandered wealth on you most vile foes too,
 So that last night each single Israelite
 Would lie alone, with wives far out of sight;
 With no result, I've lost wealth and good standing—
 Was that "help"? That is not my understanding!
 For years you've gained robes and remuneration,
 Consuming more wealth than a whole new nation—
 Was this your reading through astrology? 925
 You seem like lying, greedy pigs to me!
 I'll tear you up and set you all aflame,
 Cut your ears, nose, and lips off—you're to blame!
 I'll make you firewood, for you're such a waste!
 Past pleasures will now leave an awful taste.'
 They said, 'O lord!' and bowed down at his feet,
 'The Devil this time made us taste defeat,
 But we have warded off for years all kinds
 Of harm—what we've done boggles people's minds.
 This act deceived us, and he's been conceived: 930
 Sperm shot out and by one womb was received.
 We seek forgiveness and won't miss a thing,
 Up to the day of his birth, noble king.
 We'll watch out for that day for all we're worth,
 Preventing this way his expected birth.
 If we don't solve this, send us to our graves!
 To your thoughts and opinions we are slaves.'
 For nine whole months, he'd count each day to see
 His foe slain by the spear of destiny.
 Whoever tries to strike at realms beyond 935
 Falls upside down; his spilled blood forms a pond.
 If soil should try to pick fights with the sky,
 It would turn barren and its plants would die.

If paintings punch their painter, all they do
Is self-harm, losing all respect they knew.

*Pharaoh summons women with newborn babies to the square
as the next part of his plot*

After nine months the ruler brought his throne
Out to the square and made this order known:
'Women, go with your babies to the square!
All Israelites must come out and stand there.
Your men gained robes of honour just last year 940
As well as gold when they chose to appear—
Women, this year is your turn to acquire
Through fortune everything that you desire.
Fine robes of honour wait for worthy women
And gold caps for the heads of all their children.
Each woman who has this month given birth
Will gain from Pharaoh treasures of much worth.'
Women came out with children, and they went
Joyfully straight towards the royal tent.
Each one who'd given birth just recently 945
Came unaware of Pharaoh's treachery.
When all the women finally gathered round,
His men took the male babies that they found,
And chopped their heads off, saying: 'That is so
A foe does not survive and chaos grow.'

*How Moses was born and officers came to Emran's house and
revelation came to Moses' mother, saying: 'Cast Moses
into the fire!'*

Emran's wife, who'd borne Moses, kept away
From the commotion on that dreadful day.
Pharaoh sent midwives to men's houses, so
They could investigate and let him know:
They pointed out, 'She has a child in there— 950
Why didn't she come out then to the square?

That pretty woman who lives on this street
 Has a newborn child, but she's been discreet.'
 Officers came; she followed God's command
 To put him in a stove with her own hand.
 Then revelation came from the Divine:
 'This boy's from Abraham's most blessed line.
 And, *fire be cool!* Protect this holy child.
*This fire's bright flames will not be hot and wild.**
 Due to these words from God she now felt calm,
 Placing him there, and fire caused him no harm.
 The officers went off without success;
 Informers stayed suspicious nonetheless:
 In front of Pharaoh they condemned the way
 The officers searched, eyeing extra pay—
 They said, 'Go, officers immediately,
 And search each of the rooms more carefully.'

955

*Revelation came to Moses' mother, saying:
 'Cast Moses in the water!'*

'*Cast him in water!*' revelation said,
 'Have faith and don't tear out your hair in dread!
 Cast him into the Nile and trust in me—
 I'll bring him back unharmed assuredly.'
 This discourse has no end. Vile Pharaoh's plots
 Entangled his own legs and feet in knots.
 He killed a million children brought outside,
 But Moses was at home, unseen inside.
 This tyrant must have turned insane and blind
 To kill all embryos that he could find.
 The plot of unjust Pharaoh was a snake,
 Devouring plots the other kings could make,
 But one much greater had now come to view,
 Which gulped his plot down, swallowing Pharaoh too.
 It was a snake—Moses' rod was made
 Into one which devoured his through God's aid.*
 There's one upon another till the end—
*The end is to Him.** Don't you comprehend?

960

965

And That One is an ocean with no shore,
While all the rest are torrents and no more.
Although they're snakes, each trickery and plot
Next to '*None but God*' is in truth worth *naught*.*
My explanation has now reached the end. 970
It now must fade; *God knows the right course*, friend.

What was in Pharaoh is inside you too,
But your snakes hide inside pits far from view;
Inside you are sick traits which are the same,
Although on Pharaoh you pin all the blame.
If men say they're your traits, you'll turn belligerent,
If someone else's, you'll remain indifferent.
What ruins you? The self that is abhorred—
It leads you off the path, far from the Lord.
Your fire does not have Pharaoh's kind of wood, 975
Or else it would shoot flames too like fire should.

*Story about the snake-catcher who thought a frozen snake
was dead, tied it up, and brought it to Baghdad*

Listen now to a chronicler's old tale
For hints about this mystery through its veil:
A hunter went up to the hills one day
To catch a snake with spells that he could say—
Whether the seeker's slow or fast, my friend,
He will find what he's seeking in the end.
Strive hard in seeking and search far and wide,
For, on this path, to seek is a fine guide.
Though you should be hunchbacked, uncouth, or lame, 980
Keep seeking Him, crawl even to your aim!
By smelling scents, by silence, or by speech,
Catch whiffs of the great King you wish to reach.
Jacob told his sons, 'Search for Joseph please
Beyond all borders and all boundaries.

Search using all your senses, vigilantly;
 Wherever you go, seek him out for me!
 Of God's pure spirit *you must not despair*.
 Like one who's lost his son, search everywhere!
 Use your mouth to ask people for a lead, 985
 Then listen, all ears, so you can take heed;
 When sweet scents come, then smell in that direction,
 For you're familiar with that higher dimension;
 When you receive a kindness, seek a way
 To the pure source of kindness straight away—
 These lovely things are all from a deep sea;
 Ignore the part, view the entirety!
 Mankind's wars aim for goodness actually;
 Strength from God points towards the Tuba tree.*
 Men's rages are all for the sake of peace: 990
 Restlessness leads to rest once it should cease.
 Each blow aims to give comfort, not distress;
 Complaints help us to value thankfulness.
 Find a way from a mere part to the whole,
 From one thing to its opposite, wise soul!
 Wars aim to bring you peace and harmony;
 This hunter sought a snake for company.
 He caught it to gain an associate
 To care for, though it won't reciprocate.
 That man searched for a big snake even though 995
 The hills he climbed were covered then with snow.
 He saw a massive serpent that looked dead,
 But still filled up his trembling heart with dread.
 To find a snake the hunter looked around,
 But one dead serpent was all that he found.
 The snake-catcher will hunt just to amaze
 Stupid, impressionable people of these days:
 Man is a mountain—how should he be dazzled
 By a mere snake unless his brain has frazzled?
 Man doesn't know himself well, obviously— 1000
 He's fallen down from wealth to poverty,
 And Man has cheaply sold himself—once rich
 With satin now mere rags are what he'll stitch.

A million snakes and mountains are in awe
Of him, so why desire the snake he saw?
The snake-catcher took that dead-looking serpent
To Baghdad to create there some excitement.
He dragged the serpent round for a mere trifling,
Though it was huge, like pillars of a building:
'I've brought to you a serpent that is dead. 1005
I suffered much in hunting it,' he said.
This man thought it had died up on the hill,
Unaware that the snake was living still.
It had got frozen in the wintry snow;
It only looked dead, but he didn't know.
This frozen world is called 'inanimate';
'Inanimate' means frozen and inert.
When Resurrection's sun appears, you'll see
The body of this world move restlessly.
Moses' rod had here a transformation;* 1010
The intellect thus learnt about creation.
Since God created you from lumps of clay,
Recognize every lump that comes your way:
The dead are here; beyond one finds the living—
They're silent here, beyond though they are talking.
When from beyond He sends them down, it's clear
Since rods turn into serpents over here.
Mountains sang David's Psalms at His command;
Iron would melt like wax in David's hand.*
The wind would bring what Solomon conveyed.* 1015
The sea would understand what Moses said.*
The moon saw Ahmad point;* wild flames would turn
For Abraham to roses and not burn.*
Just like a snake, the earth gulped Korah down;*
The pillar learnt to moan and earned renown.*
Stones gave Mohammad a salute one day;*
To John the Baptist mountains once would say:
'We've sight and hearing, and we feel elated,
Though silent with the uninitiated.'*
You watch the surface of inert things, blind 1020
To those inert things' souls which lie behind—

Leave the inert realm now for that of souls,
 Hear chatter come from this world's particles.
 You'll hear God's praise when those inert things shout;
 Interpretation won't lead you to doubt:
 Your soul lacks light to see what I've reported,
 So to interpretation you've resorted:
 'It can't be glorification that you hear;
 That claim is self-delusory. This is clear.'
 But now the marvellous things that you perceive 1025
 Lead you to praise God and do not deceive.
 Therefore, since that thing prompts you to His praise
 That pointer talks in some analogous ways.
 This is the view of the Mu'tazilite*
 And that of people who lack mystic light.
 If you've not gone beyond the senses, you
 Will find the unseen realm then out of view.
 This discourse has no end. The hunter would
 Groan loudly as he'd drag his snake like wood.
 That showman wished to go to Baghdad, to 1030
 Attract huge crowds by showing something new.
 He set his stage up next to their great river,
 Causing a hubbub on what he'd deliver:
 'A snake-catcher has brought a serpent here!
 He caught a wondrous, rare beast most would fear!'
 Millions of naive people came to see,
 Gathering as prey to his stupidity.
 They all came for the show, and he would wait
 For further simpletons to congregate—
 The bigger the crowd that can be attracted 1035
 The bigger the payment that can be exacted.
 A hundred thousand idiots gathered there,
 Forming a circle with no room to spare,
 Women with men together, as they say
 Will happen on the Resurrection Day.*
 Once he began his famed show, eagerly
 The people craned their necks so they could see.
 The serpent that had frozen was beneath
 Numerous kinds of covering and sheath;

With thick ropes it had been bound by that man
Who'd executed cautiously his plan.

1040

While the expectant crowd faced a delay,
The hot sun of Iraq then shone that way.
The sunshine warmed the serpent to remove
The coldness of its parts so they could move—
Once seeming dead, it now became revived,
And stirred, surprised, proving it had survived.
That serpent's sudden movement caused much more
Amazement in the audience than before:
They started screaming in perplexity,
And then en masse the crowd began to flee.
The serpent burst its ropes, then all around
There echoed a most frightening cracking sound.
Once it broke free, it then slid on the floor
And, louder than a lion, began to roar.
Many were killed among those still around,
And from the dead they formed mound after mound.
The snake-catcher was paralysed with fear,
Wondering: 'What have I brought down with me here?'
A blind lamb woke a wolf, and unaware
It went to Azrael, who waited there:
That serpent made one mouthful of that fool—
Not hard for those who, like Hajjaj, are cruel.*
It coiled itself around this post-like man
And crushed his bones with one squeeze, like they can.
Your self's a serpent—how can it be dead?
Through grief and lack of means it froze instead.
If it obtains the same means as vile Pharaoh,
Whose personal command made the great Nile flow,
Then it will set up tyranny like his
And waylay Aarons and new Moseses.
When weak, that serpent was a little worm;
Through wealth and status gnats too can transform.
Confine the serpent deep in exile's snow!
Don't take it near Iraq's sun's melting glow!

1045

1050

1055

As long as it's just frozen, you will be
 Your serpent's morsel when it should break free.
 Kill it to be secure from death—don't waver
 Mercifully; it does not deserve a favour,
 For when it feels the sun of lust's first ray, 1060
 That wretched bat will rise and fly away.
 Declare jihad and kill it with your sword!
God will give union then as your reward.
 When that man brought the serpent with him then
 To warmer climes, it soon felt well again.
 It sought to cause harm there inevitably
 Twenty times worse than what you've heard from me.
 Without force you desire to keep yours tied,
 Sedated and yet loyal—scores have tried,
 But how can this succeed for someone base? 1065
 To slay it you'll need Moses' pure grace:
 A hundred thousand people were once killed
 By his snake-like rod doing what God willed.*

How Pharaoh threatened Moses

Pharaoh asked Moses once, 'Why did you then
 Drive to despair and kill so many men?
 At your hands they were routed mercilessly:
 They slipped down and were killed for all to see.
 They view you as their foe now and detest
 The thought of you—hatred has filled each breast.
 You called them to you, but the opposite 1070
 Was the result: they're now more obstinate.
 While creeping back from evil caused by you,
 I'm plotting a retaliation too.
 Stop thinking you can fool me—none will follow
 When you call them, except perhaps your shadow.
 Don't be deluded by what you've achieved:
 You've filled men's hearts with fear—don't be deceived!
 You could show many marvels, but still face
 Being the laughing-stock who's earned disgrace.

We've seen deceivers like you who all came
To Egypt with high hopes but left in shame.'

1075

Moses' answer to Pharaoh concerning the threat he made

'God has no partners,' Prophet Moses said.
'If He decrees my death, I'll feel no dread.
I am content and thankful, enemy;
I'm blamed here, but God gives me dignity.
To most men, I'm a wretch and foolish too,
But I'm approved and loved in the Lord's view.
With words I'll tell you, but in any case,
Tomorrow God will bring you your disgrace.
God and His slaves have glory and true might—
Adam and Satan's duel shows I'm right.*
Like God Himself, describing never ends,
So shut up, turn a new leaf, make amends!'

1080

Pharaoh's reply to Moses

Pharaoh claimed, 'Each leaf follows my commands;
The book and register are in my hands.
The people of the world now follow me—
Are you more wise than this community?
Moses, you've boasted that you are the best—
Don't be deluded and too self-obsessed!
I'll bring the great magicians of our era
To make your ignorance seem even clearer,
But just two days is not sufficient time,
So give me till Tammuz* in summertime.'

1085

Moses' reply to Pharaoh

Moses replied, 'That's not allowed for me,
Since I'm God's slave and follow His decree.

Though you are strong and I lack allies now,
 I am the slave of His will anyhow.
 While I'm alive I'll fight you, for I'm brave—
 How can I give God aid when I'm His slave?
 I'll fight until the Lord's decree's fulfilled;
 Foes only separate once He has willed.'

1090

Pharaoh's reply to Moses and the coming of revelation to Moses

Pharaoh said, 'You must give more time to me.'
 Moses replied, 'Don't try playing cleverly.'
 God sent down revelation then that said:
 'Grant him more time and do not be afraid!
 Let him have all the forty days he needs
 And let him think his cunning talk succeeds.
 I do not sleep, so let him keep on striving—
 Make him hurry. I'll stop him from arriving.
 I'll ruin all his tricks, and I'll decrease
 The things that he endeavours to increase:
 When they bring water, I'll set it aflame;
 I'll make his candy bitter just the same;
 When they unite in love, I'll spoil that union—
 I'll do such things that they can't now imagine.
 Give him the extra time and have no fear.
 Say: "Plan your tricks and bring your army here!"'

1095

*Moses gives Pharaoh more time so he can assemble magicians
 from the cities*

Moses said, 'You've been granted the delay
 By God's command, so I'll be on my way.'
 He headed home; a serpent trailed behind
 Like hunters' dogs, affectionate and kind;
 Like them it also happily wagged its tail,
 Crushing to dust the rocks along its trail.
 It kept inhaling rocks and iron too;
 It chewed the latter easily in plain view!

1100

And then it flew above the zodiac—

Georgians and Greeks fled, fearing an attack.

It spat like camels—those it fell upon

Were struck with leprosy's curse from then on.

The gnashing of its teeth left all hearts scared: 1105

Lions' souls even shivered and despaired.

When Moses reached his home and his own men

He touched it, then it was a stick again.

He leaned on it next, saying: 'How amazing:

To foes it's night, to me the sun is blazing.'

Doesn't that army see the world is full

Of morning sunshine? How incredible!

All eyes are open under such bright rays,

Yet God seals eyes with power that will amaze.

I am amazed by them and they at me— 1110

Spring brings both their thorns and my jasmine tree.

I took wine to them from the best I own,

But when it reached them it transformed to stone.

I took a bunch of roses, but each one

Transformed its sweet form to a poisonous thorn.

For selfless souls this is their destiny;

Since they aren't selfless how should these men's be?

A 'wakened sleep' is needed for the sake

Of seeing special visions while awake.

The foe of such sleep's thought of the creation— 1115

Your thoughts must sleep to gain true inspiration.

To sweep thought out you need perplexity,

For it devours all thought and memory.

Whoever is more talented down here

Is backward inside, though that won't appear.

God says, '*You are returning*.'* To your home

You'll go like some stray goats which used to roam.

When all the goats should turn around, you'll find

The one that was in front is now behind.

The lame goat that was last is now ahead: 1120

Returning makes sad faces laugh instead.

How did this group turn wretched and turn lame,

Giving up glory, buying instead all blame?

With broken legs they can reach Mecca still
 Through hidden routes to bliss from feeling ill.
 They've washed their hearts of sciences today,
 Because that knowledge doesn't know the way.
 Knowledge from higher realms is what one needs,
 For to its own root every fresh branch leads.
 Not all winged creatures can traverse the sea— 1125
Divine Truths take you to *His company*.^{*}
 So why teach ordinary knowledge then,
 If one must clean it from one's breast again?
 Don't seek to race in front. Instead be lame:
 On turning back, you'll lead them all the same!
 Wise man, *the last will be the first*—it's known
 The fresh fruit's there before the tree has grown.
 Fruit only later comes into existence,
 But it is first, the target in the distance.
 Like angels, '*We've no knowledge!*' you should say 1130
 Until '*You taught us*'^{*} takes your hand one day—
 In this school you don't know your ABC;
 Mohammad-like, through mystic light you'll see.
 Though you may not be well known in this land,
 You're none the worse: *God knows best where slaves stand*.
 Gold's found in ruined spots that are neglected,
 So that the precious treasure stays protected.
 Who would hide treasure somewhere populated?
 'Ease is found under toil,' men have related.

The mind tries to put obstacles up here, 1135
 But strong steeds break their shackles and run clear.
 His love's the burner for each single problem,
 As daylight sweeps away each single phantom.
 Look for the answer in the same direction
 From which, well-pleasing man, emerged the question.
 The road is deep in your heart—find it soon!
 Light *not from East nor West*^{*} comes from the moon.
 Why beggar-like do you search all around,
 Mountain of Truth, for echoes of your sound.

Seek it from that place where you will appeal: 1140
 ‘O Lord!’ when overcome by pain you feel.
Both pain and death will make you turn your head
 That side, so why not when relieved of dread?
In tribulation, ‘O God!’ you will pray,
 But, when it’s gone, you ask me: ‘Where’s the way?’
I say this since those men with certainty
 Of God are deep in prayer perpetually.
Those veiled by intellect and doubt you’ll see
 Sometimes veiled, sometimes feeling ecstasy;
The partial intellect’s sure, then unsure; 1145
 From doubts the Universal One’s secure.
Sell skills and logic for perplexity!
 Don’t seek Bukhara but humility!
Why am I steeped in speech to this degree
 That now they tell tall tales concerning me?
Through moaning, I seek ultimate negation,
 To then inspire the people in prostration.*
But this is no mere tale if you’ve experience—
 It shares the state Bu Bakr gained in his presence.*
‘*Mere tales of past folk*’* rebels mockingly 1150
 Called the Qur’an—this showed hypocrisy.
Filled with the Light of God, in Placelessness,
 Of past and future one could not care less.
Future and past are relative to you;
 In truth they’re one thing, but you think they’re two.
One man is someone’s son and someone’s father:
 A roof is under Zayd yet over Amr*—
Whether it’s under or above depends
 On those two persons; it’s the same roof, friends.
This discourse is a mere analogy; 1155
 Words can’t convey such deep truths adequately.
Water-skin, there’s no stream left any more—
 Seal your mouth! Candy’s ocean has no shore.

Pharaoh sends people to the cities in search of magicians

Moses returned, left Pharaoh standing there,
Who summoned counsellors from everywhere.
They said, 'We have magicians, and each one
In magic is a peerless champion.'
They thought it best then that from all around
Magicians should be sought who were renowned.
At this point Pharaoh sent his officers 1160
In all directions to find sorcerers:
An officer was sent with this sole aim
Wherever there was one who'd earned much fame.
There were two youths like this, whom they reached soon—
Their magic pierced the belly of the moon,
And they would milk that pale orb in the sky,
While on a wine jar magically they'd fly.
They'd make the moonlight look like cotton too
And sell it quickly to those with no clue,
Taking much silver—when buyers grew aware 1165
They'd slap themselves for falling for this pair.
Of all the stunts they pulled this is a sample;
They didn't follow anyone's example.
Pharaoh's official message came, which said:
'Your ruler is in need now of your aid,
Because a pair of paupers formed a menace,
Marching against the Pharaoh and his palace,
Although they only have one rod at hand,
Which turns into a snake at their command.
The ruler and his men now feel despair, 1170
Lamenting helplessly due to this pair.
Through magic surely there are methods to
Save all our lives from threats posed by these two?'
When this news finally reached those sorcerers' ears,
Their hearts filled up with longings and with fears,
And, once their veins throbbed through affinities,
Amazed, they leaned their heads down on their knees—

Just as for Sufis, knees are learning-places:
They solve the problems each magician faces.

*The two magicians summoned their father from the grave
and asked his soul about the real nature of Moses*

They asked their mother on the following day: 1175
 'Where is our father's grave? Show us the way!'
She led them, so they'd find the route to take.
 They fasted for three days for Pharaoh's sake,
Then said, 'O father, Pharaoh in despair
 Has sent this message to us both, to share
That two men make him anxious—in this case
 Before his army they've made him lose face.
That pair lack soldiers and lack weaponry
 Apart from one rod that scares worryingly.
You've left this world for where pure souls are found, 1180
 Though you appear to be still in the ground—
Our father's spirit, help us understand
 Whether it's magic or through God's command,
A cause for us to bow submissively,
 To benefit from God's own alchemy!
Though we despair, hope draws near to our place;
 Though exiles we are drawn back by God's grace.

The dead magician answers his sons

Through a shared dream their father still could teach:
 'Describing it is far beyond our speech;
To make it plain is not allowed to me, 1185
 Although I see close up the mystery;
But I will show a sign that you can view,
 So that this hidden thing is shown to you.
Lights of my eye, when you go to that place
 Find out first where he sleeps, then that night race,
While that sage falls asleep, close to his side,
 And steal his great rod, putting fear aside:

If you succeed to steal it, that means he
 Is a magician—you'll win easily;
 If you're unable to, he's a divine 1190
 Prophet of God and guided, sons of mine.
 Even if Pharaoh conquers East and West,
 Moses stays nonetheless of those God's blessed.
 Souls of your father, I've conveyed this clue—
 Inscribe it on your heart; God knows what's true.
 When the magician sleeps, then logically
 There's no one to perform his sorcery.
 When shepherds sleep, wolves feel no threat's around,
 For they're not active when they're sleeping sound.
 But how can those wolves hope to reach the sheep 1195
 Whose shepherd's God, when it's known He won't sleep?
 God's magic's real and true, and actually
 It's wrong to call that truth mere sorcery.
 This is the sign that proves that it's no lie:
 Even if he dies, God will raise him high.'

*A comparison between the sublime Qur'an and the rod of Moses,
 and the death of Mohammad to the sleep of Moses, and those who
 seek to alter the Qur'an to those two sorcerers who aimed to take
 away Moses' rod while he was asleep*

God told the Prophet once, "Though you may die
 This teaching won't die, for I've raised so high
 Your holy book and miracle. No man
 Can get past me to alter the Qur'an.
 In the two worlds I'm always your protector; 1200
 For those who scoff at you I'm their rejecter.
 No one can add on or delete a line—
 Don't seek protection then apart from mine.
 Each day I will increase still more your splendour
 And etch your lovely name on gold and silver.
 I'll make more pulpits also just for you;
 Due to my love, your wrath is my wrath too.
 For fear, they mention your name secretly,
 And when they pray they do so furtively.

They fear all the cursed infidels around, 1205
So your religion now hides underground.
With minarets I will fill all the skies
And grab rebellious men to blind their eyes.
Your servants will gain power and take towns soon;
Your realm will seem to stretch from fish to moon!*

We will preserve it till the Resurrection;
No one will abrogate your great religion.
You're not a sorcerer, My Messenger;
You're truthful, Moses' inheritor,
And the Qur'an is like his rod for you— 1210
Serpent-like, it can gulp down falsehoods too.
Even when you lie under soil, each word
You've uttered will be like the rod when heard.
They'll fail if they should try to snatch your rod,
So sleep in blessed peace all thanks to God.
Your body sleeps, but, up above, your light
Has strung a bow to arm you in the fight—
Your light's bow shoots down its all-powerful rays
At each word the philosopher's mouth says.'
The Prophet managed this, and much more too; 1215
He slept, but not his fortune, which still grew.

'When a magician sleeps, souls of your father,*
The work he does will then lack any splendour.'
Both sons then kissed his grave's soil and departed
To Egypt where they wanted a war started.
When they arrived with that aim over there,
They looked for Moses' house everywhere.
At that same time coincidentally,
Moses was sleeping under a palm tree.
The locals pointed them in the right way: 1220
'Look for him in the palm groves,' they would say.
Among the trees they saw him suddenly
Asleep but as awake as one can be:
He'd shut his eyes to sleep of course, but kept
Watch over all things near him as he slept.

Many have eyes awake but hearts asleep—

What can mere bodily eyes see? Not a peep;
Yet with eyes closed, but an awake heart, you
Can open hundreds more with which to view.

Wake up if you don't have a mystic's heart.

1225

Fight to become a seeker, make a start.
But if your heart's awake, then sleep in peace—

Your own attention to the world won't cease.
'My eyes sleep,' once the Prophet clarified,
'But there's no sleep-time for my heart inside.'

Watchmen can sleep while their great king's awake—
Sacrifice all things for the seeing heart's sake!

A thousand couplets can't in full express,
Dear mystic friend, the pure heart's wakefulness.

When they saw Moses sleeping there stretched out,
They tried to steal the rod they'd heard about—

1230

The sorcerers rushed for the rod and said:
'Let's snatch it from behind his sleeping head!'

When they prepared to draw close, then the rod
Started to quiver through the power of God.

The rod vibrated so much that the pair,
Through fear, became both paralysed right there.

Then it became a serpent and surged near,
Making them flee with faces pale through fear.

They kept on falling over due to terror,
Scampering down the slopes from their own error.

1235

Moses was heaven-sent these men thus learnt,
By seeing how they got their fingers burnt!
Then diarrhoea and a fever's ache
Made them both suffer more than they could take.

Immediately they sent a man to Moses,
So he could ask the Prophet for forgiveness,
Saying: 'We've tried to test you. How should we
Have dared to try except through jealousy?

We've sinned against the King—please now request
Forgiveness for us, you whom He has blessed.'

1240

When he forgave them, they recuperated
And then in front of him they both prostrated.

Moses said, 'Noble men, I've pardoned you.

From hell you can now feel secure anew,

As if I've never noticed you before,

So don't beg my forgiveness any more.

Come back a seeming stranger known to me,

To fight for Pharaoh's side just outwardly.'

They then both kissed the ground and went away,

1245

Expecting such a circumstance one day.

The magicians of the cities assemble before Pharaoh and receive honours and put their hands on their breasts as a pledge to defeat his enemy, saying: 'You can count on us!'

When these magicians went back to their ruler

He gave them both some precious robes of honour,

And also an advance of what he'd give

Of horses, slaves, and what they'd need to live,

Saying: 'Most worthy men, whose rank is high,

If you succeed in this next test, then I

Will shower down so many gifts on you,

That generosity will be stunned too.'

They said, 'King, through your fortune which we hail,

1250

His work will be destroyed and we'll prevail.

We're champions in this art, and none has hope

Of standing up to us, for they can't cope.

Mention of Moses has become a chain

For those complaining: "Not those tales again!"*^{*}

Mention of Moses serves now to contain

The light of Moses, which is what you'll gain.

God knows, Moses and Pharaoh are in you—

You must search in yourself to find these two.

Until the end Moses' light will prosper;

1255

The light's not different, though the lamps may differ:

The lamps and wicks are different obviously—

Their light's not different though, if you can see.

If you gaze at the glass lamp, you'll be lost:
 It brings on dualism as the cost.
 Focus just on the light and you'll break free
 From bodily limits and plurality.
 It's due to viewpoints, kernel of existence,
 That Muslim, Jew, and Magian show a difference.

*The difference of opinion over the nature and the shape
 of an elephant*

An elephant was brought to a dark building 1260
 By Indians, so they could hold a viewing,
 So lots of people would come just to see—
 They rushed into the darkness eagerly.
 It was impossible to see it there,
 So people groped to feel it everywhere:
 One man's hand brushed its trunk—he said, 'This creature
 Is like a pipe.' He based this on one feature.
 Another could feel just its ears—that man
 Believed the elephant was like a fan.
 Another felt one of its legs alone: 1265
 'Its shape is like those columns made of stone.'
 Another touched its back and then cried out:
 'It's similar to a throne without a doubt.'
 When they heard 'elephant' each one conceived
 Only the part that they themselves perceived.
 Different perspectives meant discrepancies:
 One called it straight like I's, one bent like c's.
 For arguments there would have been no space
 If each had held a candle in that place;
 The sensual eye's no better than the hand— 1270
 The whole of it the hand can't understand.
 The ocean's eye and foam are worlds apart—
 Leave its foam, use the eye inside its heart!
 It's that which sets the ocean's foam in motion,
 But you see foam and no more of the ocean.

Like ships off course we crash against each other
With eyes in darkness though we're in clear water.
You're fast asleep inside the body's boat—
Look at the water's water as you float:
Water beyond this water's waves rolls them; 1275
Spirit beyond our spirits here calls them.
Where were Moses and Jesus when That One
Watered the meadow of existents, son?
Adam and Eve too—do you even know
Where they were when God strung His order's bow?
This discourse falls short still, and is deficient;
The Speech of God alone can be sufficient.
You stumble when one speaks to you from there,
And if they don't, that's your loss—feel despair!
And when such speech is uttered figuratively, 1280
You cling onto the form still stubbornly:
You're rooted to the earth like grass, and though
You nod your head to wind, you still don't know.
You lack the legs with which to move away
Or pull your own feet from the mud today.
How will you pull your feet out? Your life too
Is so entrenched in mud—it's hard for you.
When you gain life from God, you'll feel no need,
And, traveller, you will rapidly proceed,
For when a baby leaves its nurse, it then 1285
Eats solid food and won't seek hers again.
Like seeds, you're tied to earth's milk—break apart
And seek true nourishment that's for the heart.
Drink words of wisdom, though they have been veiled
For you who can't receive the light unveiled,
So that, O soul, you can at least have sight
Eventually of the unveiled, pure light.
And travel like a star up in the heavens,
Beyond them too, with God, free from conditions.
That's how you came to being originally 1290
From non-existence—you came drunkenly.
You don't recall the pathways by which you
Arrived, but I'll recite a telling clue.

Lose your mind to be mindful! I will tell,
 But close your ears, so you can listen well.
 No, you're still in an undeveloped state:
 You live in spring—for summer you must wait.

Noble ones, this world's like a tree, and we
 Are still unripe fruits hanging from that tree.
 Unripe fruits cling fast to the branch, because 1295
 They're unfit for the palace with their flaws.
 But when they ripen and taste sweet to all,
 Their hold will weaken and they'll easily fall.
 When mouths taste sweetness due to special grace,
 The world becomes an unattractive place.
 Strictness and bigotry are immature—
 A foetus drinks blood; men deem it impure.
 There's more—I'll let the Holy Spirit say
 It to you all without my help one day.
 No, no one else will say it to your ear, 1300
 But you: when you are I there's just one here,
 Like when you fall asleep and quickly go
 From your self to the higher self you know:
 You listen to yourself and yet you keep
 Sensing someone address you in your sleep—
 You're not a single 'you', my good companion:
 You are the heavens too and the deep ocean.
 Your higher self is complex and profound,
 The Red Sea in which lower selves are drowned.*
 And sleep and wakefulness can't limit you— 1305
 Speak no more! *God knows best about what's true.*
 Stop speaking, so that you'll hear voices say
 What words and explanations can't convey.
 Stop speaking, so from sunshine you will hear
 What books and sermons never can make clear.
 Stop speaking, so the spirit speaks for you—
 Don't swim on Noah's ark as your foes do,
 Like Canaan who did that and let all know:
 'I don't want Noah's ark—he is my foe.'

'Sit in your father's ark!' Noah implored, 1310

'Don't get drowned in the flood, wretch—climb on board!'

He answered, 'I know how to swim to shores.

I've lit a different candle, too, from yours.'

'This is the flood of suffering!' Noah cried,

'Swimming and your limbs' strength are nullified.

Be silent! It's the wind of wrath and woe—

No candle now but God's is left to glow.'

He said, 'No, to that mountain I will flee

From harm; that will protect a man like me.'

'Don't go! The mountain's now like straw—beware! 1315

Only those whom He loves are safe up there.'

He said, 'When have I listened to your counsel

That you should hope that I'll now join your circle?

I've never liked the things that you have said

And in the two worlds I don't need your aid.'

'It's not the time for such disdain, my son!

God has no family nor a partner—none.

You're acting precious, and it's dangerous now;

In this court whose disdain counts anyhow?

*Neither born nor begetting,** He's eternal; 1320

He has no father, nor a child, nor uncle,

So how can He endure a child's disdain,

Or from a father? Have I made it plain?

"Don't have disdain; I'm not born." God has said,

"I don't beget—don't strut with a proud head.

I'm not a husband; there's no lust in me—

Woman stop flirting with me fruitlessly.

Bondage, humility, and servanthood

Alone have worth. Have you not understood?"' 1325

Canaan said, 'Father, you've said this to me

So often I fear it's insanity.

So many times you've told the people—why?

You only get a negative reply.

Your tiresome words won't reach my ears—I've grown

So wise and strong I've made it on my own.'

'What harm can there be?' Noah said, 'Now to

Heed what your father is advising you?'

He thus kept giving this considerate counsel
While his son Canaan gave back harsh refusal.
He did not tire from trying to help his son, 1330
But not one word got through to him, not one.
A powerful wave surged and struck Canaan's head
As they continued, leaving him for dead.
'Forbearing king!' Noah began to pray,
'My ass died; your flood swept its load away.
So many times before you promised me:
"You will escape it with your family."
I pinned my hopes on you and what you'd say—
Why did your flood now snatch my coat away?'
God said, 'He was not from your family— 1335
You're white but he was blue—could you not see?
When your tooth starts to suffer from decay,
It's not a tooth then, so throw it away!
Get rid of what was once yours, so you'll not
See your whole body then begin to rot.'
Noah said, 'From what's different I am quit;
He who dies through you isn't separate.
You know that You're the one whom I adore
And need as pasture needs the rain to pour.
I live through You and do so joyfully, 1340
Nurtured without an intermediary,
Neither united nor apart—perfection
Without cause, qualities, or any question.
We're fishes while You are Life's Wondrous Sea,
And we live through Your generosity.
In thought's cramped corner you can't be contained
And by cause and effect you are not chained.
Before and after this flood has passed through,
The One to Whom we call is always You.
I spoke with You, not them, for You're the one 1345
Who gave the gift of speech to everyone.
I'm like the lover who all day and night
Keeps his beloved's camp's trace in his sight:
As if he's facing ruins he sits there—
To whom does he sing then? Is he aware?

For sending us the flood, praise be to You,
And for removing veils of ruins too,
Because they were so awful—no reply
Came from them, nor the echo of a cry.
I want such ruins now to answer me though, 1350
The way a mountain can receive an echo,
So I might hear Your name repeatedly,
Your name, which soothes all souls, has smitten me.
As every Prophet holds a mountain dear,
So that Your name repeatedly he'll hear.
Low mountains are like stony ground—no house
Stands there for us—it's fit for just a mouse.
I speak but in response there's no caress;
The breath of my own speech stays echoless.
Better to join it with the earth instead— 1355
It's no close friend, fit just for you to tread.'
God said, 'Noah, for you I'll gather round
All men, and raise them from graves underground.
For Canaan's sake I won't let your heart shatter;
Rather I'll tell you of all things that matter.'
Noah said, 'No, with you I am content;
If You should drown me too, I would consent.
Go on and drown me, if that's Your decree,
Which is so dear—I'll bear it happily.
I won't watch anyone, but if I do 1360
It's as a pretext so I can watch You.
A lover of Your craftsmanship, my head
Is not turned by the things You've made instead.'
The lover of God's craftsmanship earns splendour;
His craftwork's lover is an unbeliever.

*Reconciliation between these following two traditions:
 'To be satisfied with infidelity is itself an act of infidelity'
 and 'Whoever is not satisfied with my decree should
 seek a different lord'*

A man asked me this question yesterday
 Because he liked to start disputes this way:
 'The Prophet said once, "Being satisfied
 With unbelief is unbelief." Our pride
 Said also, "Muslims have to be content 1365
 With His ordainment, knowing it's been sent."
 God wills the unbelief, claims one tradition;
 If I'm content, though, that is a rebellion.
 And if I'm not content, that has flaws too—
 To reconcile these two, what can I do?'
 'The infidelity is what's ordained,
 Not the ordainment by Him,' I maintained.
 'So tell apart what is ordained from fate
 Itself—your problems then will dissipate.'
 I am content with infidelity, 1370
 Not since it's bad, but since it's God's decree.
 It isn't unbelief that it's decreed;
 Don't call God infidel—you must take heed!
 Unbelief's ignorance, ordainment's knowing;
 Bestowing does not mean the same as owing.
 The writing's ugly, but don't blame the writer.
 He's shown your ugliness, but He is brighter.
 The artist's skill lets him display to you
 Both beautiful things and the ugly too.
 If I extend the discourse now at hand, 1375
 Cause questions and their answers to expand,
 Love's wisdom's savour will leave me today
 And from my service I will quickly stray.

*Parable explaining that mystical bewilderment
prevents investigation and thought*

A greying man once hurried to a barber
Who was accomplished, standing by his mirror.
He said, 'Remove the white hairs from my beard,
For I've picked a new wife and need them cleared.'
The barber shaved the whole beard off, and said:
'I'm busy. You pluck white hairs out instead!'
Mystical pain has no use or concern 1380
For mere hair-splitting's method how to learn.
A man slapped hard another man one night;
The other man charged at him for a fight.
The one who slapped said, 'I've a question. Please
Answer it first, then slap me as you please.
I slapped your neck with a loud crack, so I
Now have a question—would you clarify
Whether this cracking sound came from my hand
Or from your neck? Please help me understand.'
The other said, 'I feel so many aches 1385
I lack the time that contemplation takes.
You who lack pain can contemplate, but we
Who feel don't waste time on frivolity.'

A story

So few Companions memorized the whole
Qur'an, though each had fervour in his soul.
When kernels grow to full maturity,
Their minds will thin and then split suddenly.
The walnut, almond, and pistachio shells
And their rinds too shrink as each kernel swells:
The rinds decreased as wisdom's kernel grew, 1390
And the Beloved burns up lovers too.

Seeking's the opposite of being sought.

Through God's light rays, the Prophet burned to nought.

Displaying attributes of the Eternal

Burns up the mantle of each thing that's temporal.

When someone learnt a quarter of God's Book,

Companions said, '*A great one's with us. Look!*'

Combining form with such deep meaning can

Be only managed by a mighty man.

While drunk how can you mind your manners too?

1395

That would be too amazing to be true.

When you're without need, to show neediness

Is joining opposites like strip and dress.

The walking-stick is loved by each blind man,

Though he's a coffer housing the *Qur'an*.

One said, 'The blind are coffers filled with text

From the *Qur'an* and warning of what's next.'

A coffer filled with the *Qur'an*'s superior

To one that's empty still in its interior.

But one that's emptied is superior to

1400

One filled with dirty mice and serpents too,

For when one gains the union that is sought,

To one the go-between is then worth naught.

Since you have reached your goal, O man of grace,

Now seeking knowledge would be a disgrace;

Now that you've reached the rooftop of the sky,

What is the point of seeking ladders? Why

Apart from to help others with instruction?

Once finished, then the path has no more function.

It's stupid to keep trying to rub clean

1405

A mirror that's the clearest that there's been.

While sitting with the sultan don't remember

And seek his messenger or his old letter.

*Story about the preoccupation of a lover with reading
and perusing a love letter in the presence of his beloved,
to which his displeased beloved responds: 'Seeking the
proof in the presence of that which it is proving is
blameworthy, as is preoccupation with knowledge after
reaching the object of knowledge*

With his own sweetheart sitting opposite,
A man took out a letter and read it,
A letter full of verses and laudations,
Laments, entreaties, and long supplications.
His sweetheart said, 'If this is for my sake,
Doing this while in union's a mistake:
I'm present with you, yet you read a letter. 1410
That's not sign of a lover, now or ever.'
He said, 'Although you're present now with me,
I still don't feel fulfilled yet properly.
The things that I'd perceived in you last year
Have gone, although I'm now in union here.
I've drunk pure water from this spring, and I
Have with it now refreshed my heart and eye.
I see the fountain, but the water's gone.
Maybe a highway robber's moved me on?'
The sweetheart said, 'That means I'm not for you: 1415
I'm in this place; your sweetheart's far from view.
You are in love with both me and a state;
You've lost that state, and now it is too late.
I'm not the whole of what's sought by your heart;
Of what you seek I am now just one part.'
I am His home, not the Loved One within—
Love's based on cash, not the collection tin.
He Who is One is your Beloved Friend;
He is One, your beginning and your end.
When you find Him, you'll lose all expectations; 1420
He's hidden and yet in manifestations.

He directs states; they don't rule Him—it's clear,
 The way the moon determines month and year.
 When He commands states, they of course obey;
 Bodies turn into souls when He should say.
 One hasn't reached the end if one's dependent;
 One who seeks states is one who's still expectant.
 His hand's the alchemy of states; if he
 Moves it, then copper swoons in ecstasy.
 Death will turn sweet if He commands it to, 1425
 Nettles and thorns will turn to flowers too.
 If you're still tied to states, you're human still;
 You let them make you feel high or feel ill.
 Each Sufi is 'the moment's son', * but he
 Who's pure is free from time's grip totally.
 States are determined by his will and whim,
 And live through Jesus-like breath breathed by him.
 You are in love with states and not with me;
 It's for a state you joined my company.
 One who's now lacking, now complete, is one 1430
That sets, a thing that Abraham would shun;
 The one that sets and changes is one he
 Would shun: '*The ones that set aren't loved by me!*'*
 The one who's sad now, and now feels elation,
 Is fire then water, prone to transformation.
 He is the moon's house, but it is quite obvious
 He's not the moon; an idol's form is worthless.
 The Sufi is 'the moment's son' when he
 Clasps time as if his father, desperately.
 In love of God the pure one thus gets drowned, 1435
 Beyond states, no one's son, in no way bound.
 Drowned in light *never born*—have you forgotten
 That *God does not beget nor was begotten.**
 If you're alive, seek love that's so sublime
 Like this; if not you're bound by changing time.
 Leave all your vile and pretty forms behind—
 Look at love and at Whom you hope to find!
 Don't worry if you're ugly or you're weak,
 For aspiration's all you need to seek.

Whatever you are, keep on seeking. Try! 1440
Keep seeking water though your lips are dry,
For your dry lips give evidence that they
Will reach the water's source as well one day:
Dryness of lips is water's reassurance:
'You're led to water by all this disturbance.'
Thus seeking's a blest action that can slay
And wipe out obstacles stood in the way.
To things you long for, seeking is the key;
It is your army's flag and victory.
This seeking is just like a cock that crows 1445
When dawn arrives, so everybody knows.
Keep seeking—lack of means should be ignored;
You need no tools when travelling to the Lord.
Befriend those you see searching, son, and bow
Your head down in devotion to them now.
By mixing with them you'll turn to a searcher;
Through conquerors' shadows, you'll become a conqueror.
If an ant seeks the rank of Solomon,
Don't look down at its effort or poke fun.
Though you have wealth and skill now, were they not 1450
In the beginning just a wish you sought?

*Story about the person who, in the time of the
Prophet David, would pray night and day, crying:
'Give me lawful livelihood without struggle!'*

In Prophet David's era there was one
Who'd say before both sage and simpleton:
'O God, grant riches to me through Your grace
Without a struggle though for me to face,
Since you created me a lazy brat,
Sluggish and slothful, and so proud of that.
A mule's load is not something one can pack
On a mere donkey with a feeble back;
I'm lazy, God, created thus by You— 1455
Grant sustenance through being lazy too!

I'm lazy, dozing in the shade of grace
 And of existence, which You've put in place.
 Surely you've sent a means to earn their keep
 To lazy men who always love to sleep?
 All who can move will seek a livelihood,
 So pity those who can't move to find food.
 Send daily bread to those who feel much grief
 The way that rainclouds bring dry land relief:
 Land has no feet, so Your munificence 1460
 Drives clouds there to deliver rain at once.
 Babies can't walk, and so their mothers feed
 Them every day with all the food they'll need.
 I want my portion to come suddenly
 Without more than a plea to come from me.'
 For a long while he stayed this way to pray,
 From dawn to dusk, from night to break of day.
 People laughed at his words and raw desire
 To gain without work that would make him tire.
 'What crazy things he's saying!' people said, 1465
 'Did someone give him drugs to lose his head?
 The way to earn is hard work every week;
 God gave all men skills and the need to seek—
Through those means seek out daily bread! Don't wait
 Expectant, *enter their homes through the gate!**
 The Prophet and the ruler of this era
 Is David, whose great skills could not be clearer.
 He has much might and pomp; he's been perfected
 By blessings, since by God he's been selected.
 The miracles he can perform are countless; 1470
 His flow of waves of bounty is relentless.
 No one like him, from Adam till today,
 Sang better than the instruments men play;
 At sermons, where huge crowds had congregated,
 By his sweet voice all were annihilated.
 His preaching would attract both lion and deer,
 Oblivious to the other one being near.
 Mountains and birds would join in when he'd preach,
 Both confidants allowed within close reach.

And he had further miracles: his face 1475
Shone light that came from far beyond all space.
Despite this might, God made it understood
He too must struggle for a livelihood;
Without his weaving chain-mail, naught came down
As daily bread, despite his huge renown.
And yet a filthy wretch who's God-forsaken,
Attached to earth and kept outside of heaven,
The kind who wishes for material gains
Without the need to work or suffer pains,
This giddy-headed fool's come to declare: 1480
"Without a ladder I'll climb in the air."
One man would mock him, saying, 'Go ahead,
Here comes your harbinger and daily bread.'
Another man would laugh in disbelief:
'Give us some of your gift, great village chief!'
But he would not reduce his praise and prayers
Due to the people's many jokes and stares.
This man then quickly grew so infamous
As one who'd buy food with an empty purse,
Seen as a symbol of stupidity, 1485
Yet asking God for things still ceaselessly . . .

*How a cow ran into the house of one who was praying
importunately. The Prophet has said: 'God loves those who are
importunate in prayer, since the asking from God and the
importunity of the requester are better than what he is praying for'*

. . . Until one morning while he was still praying
With sighs as well as words that he was saying—
A cow ran in his house then suddenly,
Ramming the door to break the bolt and key.
Boldly the cow rushed in, but couldn't cope—
The man leapt up and bound its legs with rope.
He slit the cow's throat with no hesitation,
Mercilessly, without consideration,
Then hurried to the butcher straight away 1490
To get that man to flay its skin away.

The poet excuses himself and appeals for help

You who, inside me like an embryo,
 Make such demands, help me fulfil them! Show
 The way and grant success, or else please stop
 Making demands of me. Please let it drop!
 If you demand from one in penury
 Much gold, first give him it, king, secretly.
 Without you, poetry each single night
 Would not dare to emerge within our sight;
 O Knowing One, rhyme, prose, and poetry 1495
 Are Your command's slaves acting fearfully.
 You've made all things as glorifiers of You,
 Inanimates and animate beings too.
 In different fashions each one sings Your praise,
 Each unaware of all the other ways.
 Most don't believe inanimates can sing
 His praise, though they have mastered worshipping;
 Even the seventy-two sects* are without
 Knowledge about each other, plagued with doubt.
 When people speaking have no clue at all 1500
 What can a mute door know about the wall?
 Of prayers by those who speak I'm unaware—
 How can my ears then hear the mute one's prayer?
 The Sunnite has a special kind of praise;
 The fatalists opt for contrasting ways—
 Sunnites can't hear the fatalists' glorifications;
 While they can't hear the former's great laudations,
 Yet say, 'That one is lost and far astray,
 Heedless of God's command: "*Stand up to pray!*"'
 The Sunnite says, 'What does he understand?' 1505
 God has thus made them clash through His command.
 He brings to view each of their essences,
 And He makes clear what are the differences.
 Each man can tell apart His wrath and grace,
 Whether he's wise or ignorant and base,

But grace that hides in wrath or wrath inside
The heart of mercy, with no sign outside—
This can be seen by holy ones alone;
Through mystic touchstones in their hearts it's known.
Mere speculation must fulfil the rest 1510
Who fly with just one wing towards their nest.

*Explanation that knowledge has two wings and conjecture
one—conjecture is deficient and cannot fly; and a comparison
of conjecture with certainty*

True knowledge has two wings, conjecture one.
You can't fly with one wing—though it might run,
The one-winged bird falls headlong to the floor,
Then spurts up just a few feet high once more;
Conjecture's bird jumps up, then falls distressed,
Hoping with just one wing to reach its nest.
When it breaks from conjecture, knowledge brings
The answer and it opens up two wings.
After this, *it will travel straight and evenly* 1515
*Not falling on its face or hobbling feebly.**
Now with two wings, like Gabriel it flies straight
Without conjecture, hot air, or debate.
If all the world tells it, 'You've fled perdition
On God's path, following the true religion,'
It won't feel flattered, and its peerless soul
Won't join with them who would try to cajole.
And if they tell it, 'You have truly strayed,
Thinking you're mountain-like—you're a straw-blade,'
These taunts won't cause it to succumb to doubt 1520
And it won't feel hurt to see them walk out.
Even if mountains and the sea should say:
'You're stuck with being left behind astray.'
It won't have any impact on its brain,
And neither will the scoffers' taunts cause pain.

*Parable about a man becoming ill owing to him imagining
respect from people and the desire of customers for him;
and the story about the teacher**

A teacher caused his pupils so much stress
Due to hard toil which led to weariness.
They talked about how they could halt the course
And make him leave his teaching post by force:
'Since this man's never sick, what can we do 1525
To make him take days off, and free us too
From toil and from this cage which he would lock—
This man is hard to budge, like solid rock.'
One of the cunning children planned this way:
'I'll say: "Teacher, how pale you seem today!
Are you okay? Your colour's turning pale, sir.
Is it because of fever or the weather?"'
The teacher will now wonder if he's sick
For a while, so we must extend this trick.
Then you, my brother, on entering the gate, 1530
Ask, "Teacher, are you well? What is your state?"
To make him worry that it might be bad,
Because, through doubts, an intellect turns mad.
Then, let three fellow classmates of ours follow
Behind us to express concern and sorrow;
Once thirty pupils have repeated this,
It will be viewed as fact through witnesses.'
The others said, 'Bravo, sagacious friend!
May you receive the grace that God should send.'
They all agreed a firm pledge afterwards 1535
That none of them should try to change the words.
And he gave them an oath to take right there
Not to divulge the plan he would prepare.
One child's opinion influenced every mind:
He went ahead; the flock would trail behind.
Intellects have some similar differences
As human beauty in appearances;

‘The excellence of men,’ the Prophet said,
‘Is hidden in their tongues.’ Don’t be misled!

*People’s intellects differ in their original nature, and according
to the Mu’tazilites, they were originally equal, with differences
emerging owing to the subsequent acquisition of knowledge*

Intellects varied much originally. 1540
This Sunni doctrine is our testimony.
Opposing this, Mu’tazilites still claim
Intellects were all equal and the same;
Differences grew from later education,
So some know more among the population.
This is false, for a child’s opinion can,
Though he lack the experience of a man,
Produce such thoughts that people very old
Can’t comprehend no matter how they’re told.
Excellence in a man’s original nature 1545
Is better than what’s gained through struggle later.
Tell me what’s best: gifts that God first bestows
Or hoping one born lame walks when he grows?

How the children make the teacher imagine things

On the next day, the students hurriedly came
To school with their plan and its clever aim.
They all stood waiting patiently outside
For their strong leader to go first inside,
For he was after all the great plan’s source:
The head will always lead the foot of course.
Don’t seek priority, you imitator, 1550
Over the source of the sky’s light—He’s greater.
That boy went in and said, ‘Teacher, hello!
Your face is paler than a day ago.’
‘I have no ailments, boy,’ the teacher said,
‘Sit down, remove that nonsense from your head!’

Though he dismissed it, still imaginings made
 An impact on his heart, and soon that strayed.
 Another pupil said he looked sick too,
 And, due to this, his first misgivings grew.
 The pupils carried on till his first doubt
 Increased and health was all he thought about. 1555

*How Pharaoh became sick owing to false imaginings caused
 by people's reverence for him*

To Pharaoh all his subjects would prostrate,
 Putting his heart and health in a bad state.
 'Lord and king!' said each woman, man, and child,
 And this destroyed him, for he grew beguiled,
 Such that he claimed divinity with pride,
 A dragon that could not be satisfied.
 The partial intellect leads to delusion
 Because its dwelling place is dark confusion.
 If there's a narrow path here on the ground, 1560
 Without concern one follows that path round.
 But if you're walking on a high brick wall,
 Though it be wide, you'll worry you might fall.
 And when you fall it's due to your heart's tremblings—
 Consider well this fear due to misgivings.

The teacher becomes sick owing to misgivings

The teacher felt weak due to doubt and fear,
 And so took home the things he wanted near.
 He raged at his wife, saying: 'Her love's weak!
 I'm gravely ill, yet from her not a squeak:
 She didn't warn me of my pale complexion. 1565
 To see me die might be her real intention.
 Her good looks made her vain and so aloof,
 Unaware I've come crashing through the roof.'
 He reached his house and opened the front door,
 Trailed by the children from the class before.

His wife asked, 'Why so early? Is all well?
May nothing terrible make you unwell!
'Are you blind? Look at my pale face again.
Strangers feel worry that I suffer pain,
While you, here at my house, still fail to see 1570
My anguish due to your hypocrisy.'
'There's nothing wrong with you, sir,' his wife said,
'That's only a vain thought inside your head.'
'Are you still questioning me, whore?' he then asked her.
'Can't you detect the changes and my tremor?
How did I earn a wife who's deaf and blind?
I'm suffering agony of every kind.'
'Sir, shall I bring a mirror here,' she said,
'To show I haven't sinned and you're misled?'
'Damn you and damn your mirror!' he replied, 1575
'You're always filled with spite and must have lied.
I want to sleep because pain fills my head,
So bring some sheets and quickly make my bed!
He screamed when she would hesitate a bit:
'Hurry, for you this job's the perfect fit.'

*The teacher lies in bed and grieves due to imaginings
of being sick*

That poor wife made the bed that he'd sleep in,
Thinking: 'I'll have to bury this within;
If I speak, he'll accuse me and then curse.
And if I don't the matter will grow worse.
An evil omen can make men feel ill; 1580
Although they have no ailment it works still.
The Prophet said, "*If you act sick near me,
You'll then become sick in reality!*"
If I tell him, he will imagine then:
"My wife has plans to live alone again,
To throw me out of my home; now she dreams
Of wicked goals achieved by spells and schemes."
She made his bed and he retired alone,
Breathing a deep sigh, voicing a loud moan.

The children were still there, and secretly
 While studying they felt anxiety,
 Thinking, 'We're prisoners here, and it's our doing;
 We are bad builders who made this vile building.' 1585

*The children made the teacher imagine for the second time that
 he was sick, saying that their recitation of the Qur'an would
 increase his headache*

The clever boy then said, 'Read each good fellow
 In a loud voice—I want to hear you bellow!'
 When they read out aloud, he said, 'Good, boys.
 The teacher will feel worse due to this noise;
 His headache will increase from noise we make—
 Should he endure more for his small fee's sake?'
 The teacher soon confirmed this: 'Go away! 1590
 My headache's worse, so that's it for today.'

How the children got out of school through this trick

They bowed and said, 'O noble man, may you
 Stay far from danger and affliction too.'
 They then leapt out and headed home elated,
 Like birds who found the seed for which they'd waited.
 Their mothers grew enraged and shouted out:
 'A school day and you play and mess about?
 It's study time now, but you run away
 From books and what your teacher has to say?'
 Each made excuses: 'Mother, please don't bawl! 1595
 We've done naught wrong; it's not our fault at all.
 It's due to heaven's wheel of destiny
 Out teacher has become sick suddenly.'
 'That is a trick and lie!' the mothers said,
 'They'd lie for trivial things—don't be misled!
 We'll soon see if the teacher's really sick
 And then get to the bottom of your trick.'

The children said, 'Go in God's name, and you
Will find out whether it is false or true.'

The mothers of the children go to visit the teacher

The mothers went and found him the next day 1600
Looking as if about to pass away.
He sweated under covers in his bed,
His hands both bandaged, blankets on his head.
He kept on whimpering, and they would cry:
'*God give him strength!* On God we all rely.
May you recover, teacher! We all swear
That of your headache we were not aware.'
He said, 'I too was unaware until
Those sons of bitches showed me I was ill.
I was oblivious, busy with instruction, 1605
Not knowing that I had a huge affliction.'
When a man's truly busy, he can't see
His own pain or perceive his agony,
Like the Egyptian women who were blind
To their own selves when Joseph filled their mind:
They cut at their own hands, so unaware—
The stupefied soul cannot see what's there.*
Many brave men in battle have ignored
The fact their limbs were cut off by a sword,
Still using that same limb while they attacked 1610
With the belief that it was still intact.
Later each sees his hand's no longer there
And that blood pours while he is unaware.

*Explanation that the body is a garment for the spirit and that
the bodily hand is a sleeve for the hand of the spirit, while
the bodily foot is the 'boot of the boot' of the spirit*

The body you're attached to is a garment—
Seek the one wearing it; break your attachment!

For souls, God's unity is much more sweet
 And it has different hands and different feet;
 In dreams you see those ones and their connection—
 View them as real, not mere imagination.
 You have another body, so don't grieve
 When from your earthly one your soul takes leave.

1615

*Story about the dervish who went into retreat in a mountain and
 explanation of the sweetness of seclusion and retreat and entering
 this station, for God has said in a sacred hadith, 'I sit with those
 who remember Me and am friends with those who befriend Me.'
 If you are with all, since you're without Me you're without all
 If you're without all, since you're with Me then you're with all*

There was a dervish in the mountains who
 Chose solitude for sleep and waking too.
 A breeze reached him from God, Lord of Creation,
 For humans he then felt no inclination.
 Staying home seems the easiest to some, brothers,
 While travelling comes more easily to some others;
 Just as you are in love with mastery,
 That man's in love with ironmongery.
 Everyone's made for his own kind of art
 Or work, and leans towards it with his heart.
 Your limbs can't move without your soul's command;
 Without wind straw won't race across the land.
 If your own yearning is towards the sky
 Like the Homa* unfold royal wings and fly.
 But if you lean towards the earth, my friend,
 Lament and mourn from now until the end;
 Wise ones lament before in preparation;
 The stupid do it at the destination.
 Discern the outcome from the start, so you
 Won't be regretful on the Last Day too.

1620

1625

A goldsmith sees the outcome of an affair and speaks as befits that outcome to someone who wished to borrow his weighing scales

A man approached a goldsmith, whom he told:

‘Give me your scales, so I can weigh some gold!’

He said, ‘Begone, I have no sieve with me!’

That man said, ‘Give them! Stop this mockery!’

He answered, ‘I don’t have brooms at my shop.’

That man said, ‘That’s enough. You’d better stop!
Give me the scales that I’ve been asking for—

Don’t act deaf or evade this any more!’

He answered, ‘I’m not deaf. I heard it all,

1630

So don’t imagine I’m nonsensical.

I heard, but you’re a trembling old man who

Has shaky hands and a hunched body too:

Your gold’s made up of tiny bits that will,

When grabbed by your old, shaky hands, soon spill.

Then you’ll ask, ‘Fetch a broom, sir, for I must

Find my gold that has scattered in the dust.”

And when you sweep, you’ll gather dust up too

Then say: “I need to take a sieve from you.”

I said the outcome from the very start,

1635

And so, farewell! I’d like you to depart.’

*Remainder of the story about that ascetic in the mountain
who vowed: ‘I won’t pick fruit from the trees, or shake the trees,
or tell anyone, neither openly nor in veiled terms, to shake them.
I will eat only windfall’*

On that high mountain many fruit trees grew

And countless mountain pears could be found too.

The dervish up there prayed, ‘O Lord, I swore

That I will not pick their fruit any more;

I won’t pick fruit from those tall trees at all

Apart from what the wind should cause to fall.’

For love, he kept his pledge so faithfully

Until there came the trials of destiny.

This is why God said, 'You all must beware 1640
 To add "If God wills" to the oaths you swear
 I give hearts ever-changing leanings, and
 I lay upon each one a different brand;
*Each dawn I have a new activity**
 To busy Me; naught sidesteps My decree.'
 'The heart's a feather,' Mohammad once revealed,
 'It's led by the strong wind across the field.'
 Wind drives the feather each way you can see:
 Front, back, left, right, and changing frequently.
 And one hadith says: 'Deem this heart the same 1645
 As water boiling through a cauldron's flame.'
 Each moment it may seem to change its mind—
 Views come from somewhere else to it, you'll find.
 So why trust in the heart's opinion, friend,
 And make vows you'll regret much in the end?
 This too is the effect of the Lord's will:
 You see a pit, but can't avoid it still.
 It's no surprise that birds can't see the snare
 And fall into destruction from the air;
 It is surprising when it sees its place, 1650
 But goes into that snare in any case—
 With eyes and ears both open, and the trap
 In front, its wings still give an extra flap!

*A comparison showing that the shackles and snares of fate,
 though actually hidden, are visible through their effects*

You'll see in rags one from a noble race,
 Bareheaded now he's had a fall from grace;
 He is consumed with passion and feels aimless:
 He's sold his property to leave him penniless.
 Losing his household, he's become disgraced
 And walks like someone luckless and displaced.
 To an ascetic he says, 'Lord, help me 1655
 For God's sake to make progress inwardly.
 I've fallen on hard times through paths I've taken,
 And gold, wealth, and much bounty I've forsaken.

Give spiritual support to me today
So I can flee at last from this dark clay.
He begs like this from everyone: 'Help please
To give me what I seek: release, release!
His hands and feet were free and were not bound
In iron, and no guards were then around.
'From which chains do you seek release today?' 1660
From which gaol do you wish to get away?'
Only one who is pure-souled now can see
The hidden chain of fate and destiny;
Though it's invisible it's harder than
Prison or iron chains for any man,
Because the ironsmith can break that sort
And diggers take out bricks from any fort.
No ironsmiths possess the strength to sever
The thick and heavy hidden chain, however.
Mohammad once was shown that by His Lord 1665
Wrapped round a throat as a *palm-fibre cord*:*
On Abu Lahab's wife's back he could see
Firewood—'*the carrier of fuel*'* was she.
By him alone were cord and firewood seen—
To him was visible all that's unseen.
Others must try interpreting, for this
Comes from being witless, not through cleverness.
That rich man's son grew hunched due to strong chains
And now he weeps before you from his pains,
Saying: 'Pray for me, so I might gain release 1670
And flee this hidden chain that gives no peace.'
Whoever sees signs and has understood
Can surely tell apart the bad from good.
He knows, but hides this due to God's command;
To show God's secrets has been strictly banned.
This talk is endless. That fakir through hunger
Became so weak he was his body's prisoner.

*The fakir who had made the vow becomes moved to pluck pears
from the tree and God's chastisement arrives without delay*

For five days wind did not cause pears to drop;
 His hunger's flames soon made his patience stop.
 He saw a few pears near a branch's tip 1675
 But held back patiently and made no slip.
 Wind caused the branch to bend down suddenly,
 Stoking desire to eat what he could see;
 Hunger, weakness, attraction, and fate now
 Made the ascetic finally break his vow.
 Once he had plucked fruit from that tree, he'd shown
 He'd grown too weak to keep the pledge he'd sworn,
 And then God's punishment came from the skies
 To stretch his ears and open up his eyes.

*The shaikh is accused of being linked with the thieves
and his hand is cut off*

Twenty thieves were in the vicinity, 1680
 Dividing what they'd stolen wickedly,
 And the police chief was informed about
 Their place, so his men hunted them soon out.
 He chopped off their right hands and their left feet,
 Causing a scene and clamour in the street.
 They chopped off the fakir's hand too in error;
 His feet were sought next by the law enforcer,
 But suddenly a horseman gave a shout
 To the enforcer, saying: 'Dog, look out!
 That's one whom God loves—don't you understand? 1685
 Why did you cut off God's elite friend's hand?'
 The man to blame then ripped his shirt in grief
 And rushed off to confess to his own chief.
 Then the police chief came regretfully
 And begged: 'I didn't know—God vouch for me!
 Absolve me of this sin and its huge price,
 O noble chief of those in paradise!'

Then the fakir said, 'I have earned this blade;
I know my sin and errors I have made.
I broke my promise to Him in the past, 1690
So His decree took my right hand at last.
I broke my promise, knowing it was wrong,
And that caught up with me before too long.
May my hand, foot, and skin and brain too be
Sacrificed to Beloved God's decree!
That was my lot—I say it's lawful to
You who did not know; there's no blame on you.
The one who knew is He Whose every whim
Is executed—who'd try fooling Him?'
Many a bird has flown in search of seed 1695
And cut its own throat open due to greed.
Many a bird through hunger's awful pains
Was trapped inside a small cage that restrains.
Many a fish, in distant seas, mistook,
Due to their greed, a fisherman's rod's hook.
Many a girl with a veiled, pious face
By throat and by vagina earned disgrace.
Many a learned judge who had men's trust
Was brought to shame by bribery and by lust.
And Harut and Marut by wine got barred 1700
From heaven, for which they had striven hard.
This is why Bayazid took special care
When seeing laxness during ritual prayer.
Then that man with great knowledge sought what was
The reason—too much water was the cause;
He vowed, 'I'll not drink water for a year!'
Then God gave him the strength to persevere.
This effort was for his faith; he became
'Sultan and Pole of Gnostics' and earned fame.
Since the ascetic's hand due to his greed 1705
Had been cut off, he didn't grieve or plead.
'Shaikh Amputee' was used for him alone;
His gullet's error thus made him well known.

*The miracles of 'Shaikh Amputee' and how he would weave
baskets with two hands*

A visitor once saw Shaikh Amputee
 Weave baskets with two hands miraculously.
 The shaikh told him, 'Your own life's enemy,
 Why peer into my hut so suddenly?
 Why did you do this with such haste?' 'From burning
 With my excessive love and passionate yearning.'
 The shaikh said, smiling, 'Now, come in my friend, 1710
 But keep what you've seen secret till the end;
 Till I die don't divulge what you now know
 Neither to friends nor to a worthless foe.'
 Later, more men arrived and they could view
 This amputee's two-handed weaving too—
 He said, 'Creator, You know what is best
 And why what I hide You make manifest.'
 Then revelation came: 'There were some who
 Due to your handicap rejected you,
 Saying, "He could be an impostor, one 1715
 Whom God's disgraced in front of everyone."
 I don't want them to lose their faith and way,
 Through false suspicions to fall far astray—
 This miracle will make them understand;
 In work hours I give you a second hand,
 So that those wretched men with their suspicion
 Won't be rejected from the gates of heaven.
 Before these miracles I would console
 You through My essence and make you feel whole—
 I gave these miracles for them, not you; 1720
 And I made you a beacon for them too.
 You're past being scared about the body's death;
 Severance of limbs can't make you gasp for breath—
 Thoughts about severance of your feet and head
 Have left, and a strong shield has come instead.'

*The reason for the courage of Pharaoh's magicians in the face
of the amputation of their hands and feet*

Didn't vile Pharaoh threaten the magicians
With punishment on earth in the traditions,
Saying: 'I'll chop your hands and feet off, then
Hang you and show no mercy to you men'?
He thought they were in the same state throughout 1725
Of fear, distractions, vain thoughts, and much doubt,
Such that they'd shake with fear and with regrets
Due to the self's imaginings and threats.
He didn't know that they'd escaped from fright
And sat now at the gate of the heart's light;
Their shadows from themselves they now could tell
And all were joyful, fast, and sharp as well.
If the sky's mortar were to start to grind
Them down to bits in this low world, you'd find
That, since they'd seen the source of forms, distress 1730
About imaginings would hurt them less.
This world's a dream—do not count on one thought:
If in a dream a hand's lost, that means naught.
If in a dream shears chop off your sweet head,
It will remain and you will not be dead.
If in a dream you're split in two parts, still
When you awake you will be sound, not ill.
In dreams, for bodies it won't really matter
If they are maimed or even caused to shatter.
The Prophet called this world of forms we see 1735
'The dream of someone sleeping heedlessly'.
Out of blind faith, with this you now agree;
Mystics see with no intermediary.
You sleep all day, heedless without remorse.
Shadows are secondary, moonlight the source.
Your sleep and wakefulness are both sleep, friend:
A sleeper dreams he's sleeping. In the end
He thinks: 'I'm sleeping', but can tell no more,
Because to have that dream he'd slept before.

When potters break their pots, they can restore 1740
 Their pots and make them perfect as before.
 With every step men fear pits if they're blind,
 So they walk out with fears of every kind.
 A man with vision of the road ahead
 Detects the ditches and does not feel dread;
 His legs and knees don't tremble constantly,
 So hardships won't fill him with misery.
 'Arise, Pharaoh! We're not like those before
 Who'd freeze with fear when they heard monsters roar.
 Rip up our cloaks! He will sew them again 1745
 Or fewer clothes are better for good men.
 Without clothes, worthless foe, we would embrace
 This beauty tightly and feel special grace;
 There's nothing better than to be stripped bare
 Of body too—Pharaoh, you're unaware!'

*How the mule complained to the camel: 'I fall on my face a lot,
and you only seldom do so!'*

The mule said to the camel, 'My good friend,
 Going uphill, downhill, and round the bend
 You don't fall on your head along the way
 While I keep falling like one led astray;
 Repeatedly I fall flat on my face 1750
 Whether I'm in a dry or soaking place.
 Tell me the reason for this difference, so
 The way to live my life I then might know.'
 It said, 'I see more clearly with each eye
 Than you can see, and mine are very high;
 When I reach a high mountain-top, from there
 I see the furthest peaks and feel aware.
 The Lord reveals to my eyes clear as day
 All of the depths and heights too of the way;
 I take each step with vision through His grace 1755
 And so I'm saved from falling on my face.
 You see two steps before you, unaware,
 Though you can see the bait of the next snare:

*Are blind and seeing men the same to you**

In their abiding and their travelling too?

When God inserts in embryos men's souls

He gives attraction too to particles:

It can draw particles through food, to weave

The body's warp and woof that we perceive;

Until its fortieth year the Lord will sow

1760

Desire to draw such particles to grow—

Drawing such particles was taught, my friends,

To spirits by the Lord who comprehends;

The joiner of these motes is the Great Sun—

Without food He draws particles for fun:

When you wake from your sleep, he calls back then

Departed consciousness to you again.

That they've not left Him you will quickly learn,

When they come back at His command '*Return!*'

*How the particles of the ass of Ozayr were assembled after
it had rotted away, through God's permission, and were
reconstituted before Ozayr's eyes*

'Ozayr, look at your ass,' a voice would say,

1765

'You saw it previously in slow decay:

He will collect all parts in front of you,

Its skull and tail, both ears and both legs too.'

He can unite such parts without a hand:

Scattered things can be joined by His command.

Consider now a tailor who's so clever

Without a needle he sews rags together:

No thread or needle sounds impossible—

He sews and yet no seams are visible.

Open your eyes now—Judgment Day's in view!

1770

No doubts about it will remain with you.

You'll see My own uniting power entirely

And not shake when you die from deep anxiety,

Just as, while sleeping, you're secure from fear

Even though bodily senses disappear—

You do not tremble then with consternation
 Despite your senses' clear annihilation.

The shaikh who did not grieve the death of his own children

In former times there was a Sufi guide,
 A heavenly candle blazing far and wide,
 Just like a prophet with his people, who 1775
 Can open paradise's garden too—
 The Prophet said, 'Compare the shaikh to me:
 A prophet in his own community.'
 One morning by his family he was told:
 'Good natured one, why is your heart so cold?
 Due to your children's death our hearts are torn—
 We are bent double as we grieve and mourn.
 You don't weep. Why won't you lament? Please start,
 Or do you have no pity in your heart?
 When you lack pity and seem not to care, 1780
 How can we have faith something's still felt there?
 Leader, we live in hope you won't depart
 And leave us all to perish while apart.
 When on the Final Day they bring a throne,
 Our intercessor will be you alone;
 On such a day when we will be defenceless,
 We will depend on you then feeling generous.
 Our hands will grip your coat-tails desperately,
 That time when sinners lack security.'
 'On Resurrection Day', the Prophet said, 1785
 'I can't leave sinners with the tears they've shed;
 For those who have transgressed I'll intercede,
 So that from heavy torment they'll be freed.
 I'll spare grave sinners that strong punishment
 They fear for breaking their own covenant.
 The godly will have no need on that day
 For me to intercede there anyway,
 But they can intercede—their words will be
 Then just like an effective, firm decree;

Burdened men can't bear others' burdens, friend, 1790
But I'm not burdened—God made me transcend.'
The one not burdened is the shaikh; commands
Reach him from God like bowstrings in men's hands.
What does 'shaikh' mean? Old man, one with white hair—
What does white hair mean though? Become aware:
Black hairs denote his self-existence, so
A single black hair can't be left to grow.
He is a master when his being's not there,
Whether he has black hair or grizzled hair—
Black hair means human attributes instead 1795
Of hair that grows upon your chin or head.
Jesus cried in the cradle words of truth:
'I am a master, though not yet a youth!'
If human attributes leave partially,
That's black and white hair, not true mastery;
When not a single black hair can be traced,
He is a shaikh then whom God has embraced.
If he's with self once all his hair turns white,
He's not of God's elite who has gained light—
If one hair-tip of his own qualities 1800
Remains, he's not from where no plain man sees.

The Shaikh excuses himself for not weeping for his sons

The shaikh then told his wife, 'Do not imagine
That my heart has no pity or compassion.
I feel for infidels too, though their soul
Remains ungrateful for the Lord's bestowal;
I pity dogs too, wondering on my own:
"Why are they yelled at and hit with a stone?"
For dogs that bite I pray with this petition:
"Save him please from his evil disposition!
Watch over these dogs which I have made known, 1805
So they're not targets that the people stone.'"'
God brought His Friends to earth, so He might then
Make them *a mercy to the world of men*.*

God's Friend invites men to the special door—
 'Give them complete release, God!' he'll implore.
He counsels them so they will mend their ways—
 And, if this fails, 'God, don't close it!' he prays.
Ordinary men have just particular grace;
 Great men have also Universal Grace—
To Universal Grace their own is tied; 1810
 They have the Ocean's grace as their own guide.
That lesser grace joined with the Universal,
 Take this as your guide—this is no rehearsal.
An individual cannot find the ocean;
 Small pools seem oceans to his faulty vision.
If he can't see the way, how then can he
 Serve as your guide and lead you to the sea?
Once he joins with the sea, then from that moment
 He can lead you like streams or like a torrent.
If now he calls to God, it's imitation, 1815
 Not through His vision, aid, and revelation.
The shaikh's wife said, 'If you now pity men
 Like shepherds with their flocks, tell me why then
Do you not mourn your own son's shortened life
 Now death, the bleeder, has employed its knife?
The proof of sympathy is in the eye—
 Why are your eyes without tears and stone dry?'
The shaikh turned to his wife and said, 'O woman,
 Winter is not like summer—that's for certain:
Whether they're dead or living still, how can 1820
 They ever leave the heart's eye of this man?
Since they appear here clearly in my view,
 Why should I twist my face round just like you?
Though they now be beyond time, still near me
 They keep on playing just as previously.
Weeping is due to separation's pain,
 But joined with my dear ones I still remain.
Others may see them in their sleep, but I
 Can see them while awake with my own eye.
From this world I can hide myself, you see, 1825
 Scattering the senses' leaves all from their tree.'

Sensation's intellect's own prisoner;
Intellect's spirit's in ways similar—
The spirit sets the intellect's hands free
And it resolves its problems easily.
Senses and thoughts are like weeds that flow past
On the pure water's surface where they're cast:
Intellect's hand sweeps those weeds to the side,
So wisdom can see water which they hide.
The weeds are on the stream as a thick layer— 1830
Once they're swept off, water can be seen there.
If God did not free intellect's strong hand,
Due to desire the weeds would then expand,
Covering the water up—then all the while
Intellect would keep weeping and lust smile;
Once piety has chained desire's two hands,
God then sets free the intellect's strong hands.
Thus, powerful senses follow your decree
When intellect's your master totally:
While you're awake God makes your senses sleep 1835
To make appear unseen things hidden deep
Inside the soul; awake, through dream-like vision,
You then can open up the gates of heaven.

*Story about how a blind shaikh would read the Qur'an
in front of him and regain his vision as he read*

Once in the past that shaikh saw a Qur'an
Inside the home of a blind holy man.
One summer he had been there as his guest;
Together there the two would talk and rest.
He thought, 'How strange—there's a Qur'an! But why
When this good dervish lacks a seeing eye?'
Then his bewilderment from this fact grew: 1840
'No one else comes to visit like I do!
There's a Qur'an on his shelf though he's blind.
I am not wrong; I haven't lost my mind!
Shall I ask? No. I should stay patient here
So that, through patience, my aims will appear.'

He held back; for a while he felt unease
 Till he heard: '*Patience is the key to ease.*'

*How Loqman saw Prophet David making iron rings, but
 refrained from asking him about it because he bore in mind that
 'Patience will lead to the resolving of the question'*

Loqman once came near David and he saw
 Him making rings from iron and felt awe.
 He then observed as well that lofty king 1845
 Linking together every single ring.
 He'd never seen coat-mail being made before,
 So he was curious to discover more.
 'What is this? Shall I ask?' he contemplated,
 'With these joined rings what have you now created?'
 Then he reflected, 'Patience is the best
 Approach, and reaches your goals earliest.'
 When you don't ask it is made manifest—
 Patience's bird is faster than the rest.
 It will take longer if you choose to ask; 1850
 Impatience turns ease to an arduous task.
 Loqman stayed silent, so immediately
 David's work was completed, and then he
 Put on the coat of mail that he had made
 In front of patient Loqman, who had stayed.
 'This garment is so worthwhile, you should know,
 For your protection from each combat blow.'
 'Patience is too,' Loqman said once secure,
 'For it protects against pain you'd endure.'
 Patience and truth are paired together, friend— 1855
 Read closely '*By the time*'* until the end!
 God has made numerous cures, but none can claim
 They've seen a cure like patience all the same.

*Remainder of the story about the blind man and
the Qur'an*

The guest was patient as he'd taken heed
And so the problem was resolved with speed.
That night he could hear somebody recite
The pure Qur'an, then saw a stunning sight:
The blind man reading it without a flaw—
He couldn't wait more, so enquired in awe:
'Amazing! How, blind man, are you reciting?' 1860
How can you possibly see holy writing?
You have read out the verses of your choosing;
To keep your place your finger too you're using—
Your moving finger proves that I'm not lying:
You see the script on which you are relying.'
'You who've left ignorance,' that man replied,
'By God's work why are you now mystified?
I prayed, "You from Whom we seek help in strife,
I'm hungry to recite as though for life.
I don't know it by heart; when I recite 1865
Grant my eyes vision through Your Perfect Light.
For that short time return to me my vision,
So I can read Your Pure Book with precision."
From God then came the cry: "Industrious fellow,
Who keeps faith in me during every sorrow,
You have good thoughts and live with the desire
That every moment you might hear, 'Rise higher!'
Whenever you hold the Qur'an to read,
Or to inspect the texts if you feel need,
I will restore your vision at that moment— 1870
Venerable man, to me you are important."
He has done this, so every time that I
Wish to read the Qur'an we magnify,
The One Who misses naught, for He's informed,
The Noble King by Whom all things were formed,
That Peerless King restores for me my sight
At once like lamps which brighten the dark night.'

That's why God's Friends will make no protestation:
 For what He takes He soon sends compensation.
 If He burns down your vineyard, grapes are sent; 1875
 He sends you joy when He sees you lament.
 He gives a hand to someone who's lost his
 And makes hearts filled with grief receive sheer bliss.
 Thoughts of '*We won't submit*' have gone away,
 Since what is lost now He will soon repay.
 Warmth comes without fire when He should desire,
 So I'm content if He puts out my fire;
 When He gives light without lamps, why should you
 Fret if you lose your lamp as fools would do?

*Description of some Friends of God who are content with
 God's decrees and do not pray, 'Change this decree!'*

Hear from me now the following description 1880
 Of wayfarers who feel no opposition:
 They're different from those saints who supplicate,
 Who sew then tear, alter, and then rotate.
 I know these other Friends of God whose station
 Means that their lips are closed to supplication:
 Due to contentment that these Friends possess,
 Attempting to change fate's unfaithfulness.
 From fate they taste a special ecstasy,
 So it's unfaithful to seek liberty.
 God's made His good opinion of them known, 1885
 So they don't wear dark mourning clothes and mourn.

Bohlul questions a dervish

Bohlul once asked a dervish, 'How are you?
 Dervish, please tell me of what interests you.'
 The dervish answered, 'How should someone be
 For whom the world's work's done perpetually,
 For whose wish torrents and all rivers flow,
 Whenever he should wish the stars all glow,

And for whom life and death are officers
Who move around whenever he prefers?
He sends condolences at times he pleases, 1890
Congratulations too as hardship eases;
If he wills wayfarers can move ahead
Or fall astray inside his snare instead.
In this world no mouth ever smiled, you see,
Unless it was approved as his decree.'
Bohlul said, 'King, your words are true and blest,
For in your radiance this is manifest,
This and much more besides, veracious man,
But please explain as clearly as you can
Such that both wise and foolish people too 1895
Will readily accept what's claimed by you.
Put it now into words appropriate
For ordinary men to benefit.'

The perfect speaker offers food for minds—
His table has food of all different kinds,
So that no guest will be without provision,
Each finding there the source of his nutrition,
Like the Qur'an, because its seven layers
Give common folk and the elite their shares.
The dervish said, 'The masses understand 1900
At least that this world follows God's command:
No leaf will ever drop off from a tree
Unless it is the King of Fate's decree.
No morsel passes from the mouth below
Until God tells it, 'Enter! You can go.'
Men's inclinations form their reins which lead
The way desired by He Who has no need.
On earth as in the heavens, as you'll learn,
No atom moves a wing and no leaves turn
Save by the Lord's eternal firm command— 1905
But how can one make others understand?
Who can count all the leaves there on the branches?
How can mere speech encompass what is boundless?

Hear this much: the occurrence of each action
 Is just by means of the Creator's sanction,
 And once the slave's content with God's decree,
 He then becomes its servant willingly,
 Not as a burden, nor for recompense,
 But from his virtuous nature's excellence.
 He wants his life for his own sake no more; 1910
A life of pleasure's not what he lives for.
 Whenever God's command is what dictates,
 Life and death are the same to him as fates.
 He lives for God's sake and not for mere wealth;
 He dies for God's sake, not due to ill health.
 His faith is for God's sake; he aims to please.
 That's not for paradise with streams and trees.
 For God too he abandons unbelief,
 Not out of fear of hell, nor for relief,
 And not through taking on forced discipline— 1915
 His nature was that way in origin.
 He laughs the moment he sees God content;
 He views as sweetest candy fate that's sent.
 When God's slave's character takes such a form
 To his command the world must then conform.
 Why should he pray to God and remonstrate,
 Saying: 'O Lord, please change this bitter fate!'
 His and his children's deaths are not of note
 For him, like something pleasant down his throat;
 This faithful man compares their agony 1920
 With how sweets give poor old men ecstasy,
 So why should he resort to supplication
 Unless he sees this cause God's satisfaction?
 His supplication and his intercession
 Are not due to that pure man's own compassion,
 Which was consumed that day when from above
 God lit up the bright lamp of His slave's love.
 Love is hell-fire for attributes—that flare
 Has burned his attributes to the last hair.
 How can night travellers fathom this distinction, 1925
 Except Daquqi,* who rose in this fortune?

Story about Daquqi and his miracles

Daquqi was so handsome and well dressed,
Lover of God with miracles so blest.
He walked the way the moon glides by at night;
Through him night travellers' spirits all grow bright.
For long in one place he would seldom stay,
Spending in every village just one day.
'If I stay in one place two days,' he said,
'Love for that dwelling might then turn my head.
Don't be seduced by dwellings, soul, take heed! 1930
Travel to independence from all need.
I won't attach my heart to one location,
So it stays pure for its examination.'
By day he travelled and by night he prayed;
Falcon-like on the king his focus stayed,
Cut off from men, not due to bad within him,
Nor dualism born of egotism,
Compassionate to creatures, intercessor
Whose prayers would always soon receive an answer,
Refuge to good and bad and always generous, 1935
Better than both your parents and more precious.
The Prophet said, 'Dear men, like fathers do,
Compassionately I sympathize with you.
Because you are all parts of me—why then
Separate small parts from the whole again?'
Once severed that part's useless. Can't you see
A severed limb's just carrion tragically?
It's dead unless it joins the whole once more;
Of life it has no knowledge any more.
Even if it should move, what would that prove? 1940
The freshly severed limb can also move.
And if the severed part falls, nonetheless
The whole won't then become a portion less.
One can't explain with words these mysteries;
Comparisons have their inadequacies.

Resumption of the story about Daquqi

The Prophet once compared his friend Ali
 To lions, though he's different actually.
 From likeness, difference, and comparison
 Head to Daquqi's story now—move on!
 That jurist—chief for his community 1945
 Excelled the angels too in piety,
 Moved with more measure than the moon; how jealous
 Religion felt to see one so religious;
 Though he would pray and show much piety,
 He'd seek out God's elite still constantly:
 His main aim on his travels was to meet
 For just a moment one of God's elite,
 So he would pray while travelling: 'God, let me
 Become familiar with that company.
 O Lord, make me a slave who is devoted 1950
 To those whom my heart recognized and noted.
 And, God, though they be veiled still from my eyes,
 Make me treat well those I can't recognize.'
 God would say, 'Great chief, what love in such pleas
 And what an unquenched thirst in prayers like these!
 You have My love—why seek some others' too—
 Why seek a human being when God's with you?'
 He'd answer, 'Lord, my secrets You can read.
 You opened to my heart the path of need.
 I'm seated in the middle of the sea, 1955
 Yet lust for water from a jug grips me.
 Like David, I possess now ninety sheep,
 Yet lust in me for others still runs deep.
 Lust for Your love brings glory, rank, and grace;
 Lust for all other things just brings disgrace.'
 This manly lust brings gains; it's not the same
 As that of dazzled ones, which just brings shame.
 Lust of the manly ones brings them progression;
 Lust of effeminates brings them regression—

The former's part of masculine perfection,
The latter just disgusts and earns rejection.
There is a hidden mystery right here, one
For which to Khezzr's side Moses would soon run
Like someone thirsty who's insatiable—
Don't settle when much more's attainable!
This court is limitless, so now disown
And leave your proud seat—this path serves as throne.

*The mystery behind Moses seeking Khezzr despite the perfection
of his Prophethood and proximity to God*

Learn now from Moses the Kalim's sound ways
And witness what, through yearning, this man says:
'Though I have Prophethood, which ranks so high,
I seek Khezzr now to clear self from my eye.'
'Moses, your people you have left behind
And, dazed, a special man you aim to find.
You're free from fear and hope, a king who's strong,
How long will you keep seeking him, how long?
What's yours stays with you—this you understand;
O sky, how long keep roaming on mere land?'
Moses said, 'Please hold off reproaching me:
Don't waylay sun and moon to that degree!
To *where the two seas merge** I'm heading nearer,
To follow the true sultan of the era.
*I will make Khezzr a means to my goal, friend,
Or pass on a night journey with no end.*
With wings I will fly on for years to come—
What are mere years? For a millennium!
I'm heading out—do you think it's not good?
Love of God is worth more than love of food!
This discourse has no end. Narrate for me
The thrilling tale about this Daquqi.

Resumption of the story about Daquqi

Daquqi, may that man by God be blest, 1975
 Explained, 'I roamed a while from East to West;
 Out of love for the moon for years I wandered
 Unaware of the path and so bewildered.'
 'Barefoot on thorns and rocks why do I tread?
 I am bewildered, selfless, off my head.
 Don't look at just these two feet on the ground—
 It's by their hearts that lovers move around:
 When through its sweetheart it's intoxicated,
 The heart can't tell then where the path's located.'
 Bodies can be described as 'long' or 'short'; 1980
 The spirit's path though is a different sort.
 Your foetus gained an intellect—no station,
 Nor any footprint, marked this elevation.
 The soul moves round beyond both time and space;
 The body learnt from it in the first place.
 He's left behind all bodily motion now;
 Seen in a body, he's free anyhow.
 He said, 'I sought out ardently one day
 The Light of God in humans, just one ray,
 To find an ocean in a drop, or one 1985
 Atom that can envelop the whole sun.
 By the time that on foot I reached the shore
 It was by then approaching night once more.

*The apparition of what looked like seven candles in the direction
 of the shore*

I noticed seven candles from a distance
 And rushed towards them through my own persistence.
 Each candle's flame's light stretched so beautifully
 Up to the heavens, as if over me.
 Bewilderment filled me and then it led
 Its wave to surge above my reasoning's head.

Candles had been lit up of a rare kind, 1990

Yet people's eyes to them are somehow blind—
People sought lamps despite the candles' radiance
While they were lit up, thereby showing ignorance.
Blindfolds covered their eyes, which left me shocked—
By "*He guides whom He pleases*"* they'd been blocked.'

The seven candles then appeared as one candle

Then suddenly I could see with my eye
Seven become one, cleaving the whole sky;
The one turned into seven flames anew.
My drunkenness and stupefaction grew.
There were connections too between each candle 1995

Beyond what words express and brains can handle.
Things that you can perceive with just one look
Can't be expressed in speech or in a book;
Ears, even after years, will never see
Things that in flashes you sense inwardly.
Return *to yourself*. Since this has no end,
*I can't find praises fit for You to send.**

I ran much closer, curious now to see
These candles' clues about divinity.
And I became astonished while I raced, 2000
And witless, falling down due to my haste—
There in the dust for some time I remained,
Unconscious, with my yearning uncontained,
Until my wits returned and I could stand
And move without a body in this land.

How those seven candles appeared as seven men

The seven candles seemed then to my eye
As seven men; their light reached to the sky.
Next to those rays, daylight looked dark as night.
Their brightness overwhelmed all other light.

Those candles become seven trees

Each took a tree's form then to my surprise, 2005
 Their greenness blessing my astonished eyes—
 So many leaves kept branches out of view,
 So many fruit that covered its leaves too.
 Their branches stretched beyond the lote tree's place*
 In heaven—in fact, they reached beyond all space.
 Their roots stretched down into the earth's deep core,
 Beyond the ox and fish and then some more.*
 Their roots more so than branches formed a smile;
 One's brain is stunned by such shapes all the while.
 After bursting them open, beams of light 2010
 Spurted out from each single fruit in sight.

How those trees were kept hidden from the eyes of people

More wondrous was that millions of men
 Passed by this desert and the plain just then,
 But they spent their time chasing shadows and
 Even made shades from rugs across the land;
 They didn't see the shadows of these trees—
 I spit on such distorted eyes as these!
 God's wrath had sealed these people's eyes, to bar
 Them from the moon—they just see a small star,
 And just a mote instead of the sun's rays, 2015
 Though they don't lose hope of God's generous ways.
 The caravan lacks food, yet fruit that's ripe
 Drops off the tree—God's magic's a strange type.
 Thirsty men fought, and never paused to wonder,
 Over such rotten fruit, as though fine plunder,
 While every leaf and bud of that same tree
 Screamed out, '*Would that my people now could see!*'*
 From every tree rang out the cry, 'Come here
 Towards us, wretched people, while we're near!'

God's strong possessiveness then told the trees: 2020

‘We’ve sealed their eyes. *There are no sanctuaries.*’*

If someone told them, ‘Head that way to find

The trees which will fill with delight your mind.’

They would have said, ‘There’s some poor wretch again—

Divine will’s made that drunkard turn insane.

His brain has rotted like an onion, due

To ecstasies and trials of hardship too.’

And that man would have stayed there saying, ‘How odd!

What is the veil that blinds these people, God?

The intellectuals, each with an opinion, 2025

Won’t take one step in the correct direction.

Their obstinate minds make them all insist

That no such trees can possibly exist.

Am I the one who is insane instead,

Or has the Devil put things in my head?

I rub my eyes each moment, wondering how

And ask myself if I am dreaming now—

How can it be a dream? I ate the fruit,

So I can’t doubt it’s real. There’s no dispute.

When I see the deniers turn away 2030

From this most lovely orchard every day,

Suffering poverty and neediness,

Spending their lives on what is valueless,

And lusting after one leaf from a tree,

These destitute ones sighing heavily,

Millions of them now having fled on foot

From these great trees and all their special fruit,

“Have I gone mad?” I ask repeatedly,

“Have I touched trees that are imaginary?”’

Read ‘*Not until the Prophets felt despair*’ 2035

And ‘*Thought they’d been denied*’* did aid come there.

Recite it with *tashdid*,* or otherwise

The Prophets would themselves be veiled by lies.

The Prophets’ souls lapsed into doubting then

Due to denials by the wicked men.

After the doubting our aid came in time:

‘Renounce them for the soul’s tree and then climb!

Eat up the fruit and give each man his lot—
Each moment wondrous sorcery's being taught.'

The people say, 'Amazing—what's that sound 2040
In this plain where no trees or fruit are found?
Deceiving words of the intoxicated
Which say, "Near you huge orchards are located?"
We've rubbed our eyes yet see no orchards here,
Just desert and a harsh path most would fear.
Amazing how they prattle on in vain!
Why should they do this? They should all explain.'
I answer back, 'What marvel, what surprise!
Why has the Lord put seals upon their eyes?'
In a dispute Mohammad was stunned once; 2045
Bu Lahab had the same experience.
But there were differences between the two—
What matters is what that Great King will do.'
Daquqi, silence! Rush ahead from here—
Why harp on where there's not a single ear?

The seven trees become one

'Seven trees merged as one,' Daquqi said,
'As I, who was so lucky, moved ahead.
Each moment they kept changing: seven then one.
Perplexity from this left me undone.
Then I saw all the trees perform the prayer, 2050
Forming, like an assembly, one row there:
One tree in front who led the prayer; the others
Standing behind and worshipping like brothers.
Their standing, bowing, and prostrating then
Left me amazed—they acted just like men.
Then I recalled God's words, which I'll relate:
"He told the stars and trees to all *prostrate*."*
These trees did not have waists to bend, nor knees—
What an assembly formed here by mere trees!

The inspiration from above came down:

2055

“Are you bewildered still, man of renown?”

The seven trees become seven men

‘After a long while these trees turned to men

Seated before God, Who’s unique. I then

Kept rubbing hard my eyes and wondered who

These seven lion-hearts were and what they do.

Once I had neared them on the path I’d taken,

I greeted them, alert, no longer shaken.

Then to my salutation they replied,

“Daquqi, noble men’s great source of pride!”

How did they recognize me instantly

2060

When they had not before set eyes on me?

Quickly they read my mind just like a book

And gave each other a brief, furtive look.

They answered me with smiles, then: “Our dear friend,

Too hidden still for you to comprehend?

How can the secret of where’s left and right

Be hidden from a God-drunk heart’s clear sight?”

I thought, “Their gaze is on realities,

So how do they know names, forms such as these?”

“If a name disappears from saints,” one said,

2065

“They are effaced, not ignorant instead.”

Then they said, “We would like to follow you,

Our holy friend, and copy what you do.”

I said, “Okay, but give me some time, please.

Time’s passing makes me face some difficulties,

Which your companionship that has much worth

Could solve as grapes grow from the nurturing earth

And seeds with kernels graciously consort

With dark soil to form life of a new sort—

In that soil it was able to efface

2070

The self and not to leave behind a trace;

Effacement changed it from a closed-up seed:

It opened and expanded, rode its steed.

Once it shed self and faced its origin,
 Form left, display of meaning could begin.”
 They nodded then to say, “At your command!”
 Causing a flame in my heart to be fanned.
 There, for a stretch of time I meditated
 With that group, and from my self separated;
 My soul escaped to freedom from time then
 Because time is what turns youths to old men.’

2075

All change is due to time, therefore if you
 Are freed from time, you’re free from changing too.
 If you spend time beyond time, you will see
 Your attributes all vanish totally.
 Of timelessness time has no clear perception,
 For it sees no way out but mystification.
 In the realm of this search, each one is tied
 Inside a stable that’s been specified.
 Each stable has its trainer—no admission
 Is given to deniers without permission.
 If lust makes one break out, it sticks its head
 Into the stable of the rest instead—
 Immediately strong guards will then appear
 And drag it by its halter back from here.
 My friend, if you don’t notice those guards still,
 Look at your choice opposing your own will:
 You make a choice, but your own hands and feet
 Will not respond—you’re trapped and can’t compete.
 Have you tried to deny the guards their role,
 Renaming them ‘threats from the carnal soul’?

2080

2085

Daquqi goes forward to act as the leader

Daquqi, this talk has no end—run fast
 Before the prayer’s allotted time has passed:
 Unique man, do the dawn prayer that is due,
 So that the day can be adorned by you.

Leader with clear sight, to have this position
The prayer leader must have perfect vision:
It's disapproved by law to pray behind
A congregation leader who is blind.*
Though he be well trained at the highest school, 2090
Clear sight is better even in a fool,
Because the blind man can't avoid pollution—
Sight is the best means to avoid confusion.
The blind man cannot see dirt in his way—
May no believing man turn blind, I pray!
The outwardly blind is impure outside,
The inwardly blind is impure inside;
Outward impurity is washed away,
The inward kind increases day by day—
It only can be washed by tears the moment 2095
Inner impurity becomes apparent.
God has called infidels 'unclean'—it's clear
Outward uncleanness is not meant here:
Infidels' outward faces aren't impure;
Their faith and ethics are what's meant for sure.
The outward kind's smell wafts from yards away,
The inward kind's from Syria to Rayy.*
Its smell will reach the sky and then still rise
Up to the houris and to paradise.
I speak to suit your own capacity, 2100
Seeking one who perceives things perfectly.
Perception's water, body the jar it fills,
And when the jar breaks all the water spills.
The jar has five big holes that you can't fill
With water or with snow, try as you will.
The order '*Shut your eyes!*' has come, but you
Have still not done what you've been told to do.
Your mouth, through speech, steals what you understand;
Your ear soaks it away like driest sand.
Your other holes act in a similar way, 2105
Drawing your hidden wisdom all the way.
If you take water from the sea without
Replacements, then a desert soon spreads out.

It's late now, otherwise I'd give tuition
 About replacements and such substitution,
 Such as where they've arrived from to the sea
 After some being used up previously.
 A million animals drink from this source;
 Clouds carry water on a different course.
 The sea then draws replacements, but from where? 2110
 The ones with proper guidance are aware.

We've started this book's stories hastily,
 So they're unfinished in this Masnavi.
 Hosam, the heavens haven't brought the birth
 Of such a king who could have equal worth.
 You've seldom entered in our souls, and they
 Feel so unworthy when you come their way.
 How often I had praised those of past days.
 You were the only one I meant always:
 A prayer knows its own home: whoever's name 2115
 You use in prayer it reaches its true aim.
 God gave us parables to hide this praise
 From those who don't deserve to know these ways.
 Though this praise seems unworthy, still be sure
 That God accepts *exertions of the poor*.
 He will excuse it, though it seems deficient,
 For, from blind eyes, two drops are deemed sufficient.
 The moon and birds know this obscurest route
 By which I've praised this man of good repute.
 Thus, sighs of envy of him will decrease 2120
 And envy's teeth's attempts to bite will cease.
 A jealous man won't find his dreamt-up goal,
 A parrot can't fit in a mouse's hole.
 His image is made up—don't judge too soon:
 It is your eyebrow's hair, not a new moon.
 Beyond both realms I send praise gratefully.
 Write 'Daquqi steps forward' now for me.

Daquqi steps forward to lead the congregation in prayer

Praise to the Prophets blends in combination
With praise to righteous men and salutation;
The praises are commingled as one whole 2125
Just like jugs emptied into one large bowl.
The focus of all worship is the One,
So all of the religions must be one;
All praises reach God's light eventually;
With men and forms their stay is temporary.
Who can you praise but He Who is deserving?
Still those astray will follow their own reckoning.
When light reflects across a wall, just think,
For all those rays the wall serves as a link;
The moon appeared inside a well one day; 2130
A lost man poked his head inside to pray.
When the reflection went back to its source,
He lost the moon and stopped prayer in remorse—
The moon was the real object of his praise
Although he faced the moon's reflected rays.
To the moon, not reflections, praise belongs,
But it is unbelief when it's done wrong.
Through unbelief that bold man was misled:
He thought the moon was down below instead.
By idols people too became distracted, 2135
Then felt ashamed that on their lusts they'd acted.
Fancies feed lust and lead you far away
From Truth, where you should face each time you pray.
What pulls you to a wish you should now see
As wings which take you to reality.
Your wings drop off when you try to appease
Your lust—you lose control and that wish flees.
Preserve your wings, don't let lust start a fire,
And then ascend on wings of true desire.
People think they are doing pleasing things 2140
When, for a fancy, they tear off their wings.

I need more time to properly explain,
But I am poor and must stay quiet again.

The group follow behind Daquqi

Daquqi stepped ahead to lead the prayer—
In front of satin, silk stood that's more rare.
Those kings then followed him just like a herd
Of camels, waiting on his every word:
Once they'd said the *takbir*,* they all then fled
This world like sacrifices, with no head.
'Prayer leader, hear the meaning that is true: 2145
"God, we now sacrifice ourselves to you."'
While making sacrifices they exclaim
'*God's great!*'* While slaying self you do the same!
Ishmael's the body, Abraham the soul
Which utters the *takbir* in the slayer's role.*
Desire destroys the body in the end;
'*Bismillah*'* sacrifices it, my friend.
They stood in rows before God then to pray
And have their deeds weighed as on Judgment Day.
They shed tears as they stood before God then, 2150
Just as on Judgment Day do fearful men.
God asks then, 'What have you brought Me, in view
Of all the respite that I've granted you?
In your life what have you at last achieved?
For what have you used food that you've received?
With what have you worn out your radiant eyes
And all your other senses? Don't tell lies.
You've used up all your senses and your mind,
So what's your gift from that realm left behind?
I gave you hands and feet as good as tools— 2155
They didn't come down by themselves, you fools!
Millions of harsh and painful messages
Come from the Lord that day to you like this.
While standing up in prayer, their bodily parts
Bend down, as out of shame their bowing starts.

Due to the shame, which all the while gets stronger,
They lose the strength to stand up any longer.
Then the command arrives: 'Lift up your head
From bowing down and answer what God's said!'
Each lifts his head up; he who's earned disgrace 2160
Falls back down like a snake flat on his face.
Then orders come: 'Lift your head from prostration!
Relate your deeds for our communication!'
He lifts his head up one more time, and then
That shamefaced one falls on his face again.
God says, 'Lift up your head now and relate
Your deeds to me, as I interrogate.'
No longer with the strength to stand at all
Because these awesome words have struck his soul,
He kneels down under such a heavy load 2165
And God says, 'Speak up clearly! Give what's owed.
Where is your thanks for what I gave to you?
Show me that wealth and all your profit too.'
He turns his head right for the salutation*
To souls of Prophets and men of high station
As if to say: 'Please intercede for me,
For I'm stuck in this mud and wish to flee!'

*Explaining how the salutation towards the right at the
Resurrection indicates dread of being examined by God
and the appeal to Prophets for help and intercession*

The Prophets say, 'No cure's left any more.
Solutions and the means were here before.
You're an untimely bird, unlucky one, 2170
Leave us alone, stop bothering everyone!'
Then the man turns his head the other way,
Left, to his kin: 'Be silent!' they all say.
'Give the Creator, God, your own reply.
Who are we to? On us do not rely.'
With no cure either side, that helpless heart
From its own depths is quickly torn apart.

This poor wretch now despairs of everyone
 And joins his hands to pray to God, the One:
 'I've now lost hope in everyone but you, 2175
 The First, the Last, the Ultimate One too.'
 When you next pray, observe these signs we've shown,
 That make what's coming to you clearly known.
 Bring the chick out now from the egg of prayer,
 Don't peck at it without respect or care!

*During the prayer Daquqi hears mails from a boat that is
about to sink*

Daquqi led the prayer as said before,
 Performing it at long last by the shore.
 The congregation all looked very fine
 Behind the chosen leader, all in line.
 His gaze changed its direction suddenly 2180
 On hearing, 'Help! Help!' coming from the sea.
 He saw a ship there in a perilous state,
 Suffering, while tossed by waves, an ugly fate.
 Huge clouds, enormous waves, and a black night—
 Three darknesses, shipwreck fears too in sight.
 Like Azrael, a fierce wind suddenly
 Tossed the waves left and then right violently.
 The men on board almost lost consciousness
 And they raised desperate cries in sheer distress.
 In mourning then they beat their heads as well, 2185
 Turned faithful now, even each infidel;
 They promised and made heartfelt vows right there
 To God on that hour while engaged in prayer.
 Bareheaded in prostration lay these men
 Who never had faced Mecca until then.
 'That worship's pointless,' these men used to say,
 But saw the power of life in it today;
 They'd now lost hope in every man that lives,
 Including parents, friends, and relatives—
 Renunciants and hedonists equally 2190
 Turned pious as cruel men in agony.

There wasn't a solution anywhere;
When all else fails one knows it's time for prayer.
On every prayer of theirs and desperate sigh,
Black smoke rose up from them towards the sky.
Just then, the Devil yelled as a fierce foe:
'Dog-worshippers, you've two banes: death and woe!
Hypocrites and deniers, that will be
The final outcome of your destiny.
And then your eyes will weep, as your mistake 2195
Made you become a devil for lust's sake.
You won't recall how God helped you that day
Of peril, when you all had lost your way.
These words came from the Devil to deceive—
A good ear is required still to perceive.
Mohammad, Pole and Sea of Purity,
Told us before about this accurately:
That stupid men see at the very last
What wise men saw at the first stage they passed.
Though at the start it may have been concealed, 2200
To wise men at the start it is revealed;
Its start's concealed, but ignorant and wise
Both later see its end with their own eyes—
Stubborn wretch, if you can't see it today
When did your prudent mind get snatched away?
What's prudence? Viewing this world with suspicion,
Expecting grief to come all of a sudden . . .

The conceptions of the prudent man

. . . As when a lion grabs a man, and then
Drags him back through the jungle to his den—
What will he think while being dragged away? 2205
Religious expert, think that way today!
Fate's lion drags to jungles souls inside
All people trade has left preoccupied;
Those who fear poverty in this same way
Are totally submerged in brine today.

If they'd instead fear poverty's creator
 They would see everywhere the wealth and treasure.
 All of them, fearing pain, fall in its essence,
 They seek existence but find non-existence.

*Daquqi's supplication and intercession for the deliverance
 of the ship*

And when Daquqi saw that scene of woe, 2210
 His pity stirred and tears began to flow.
 'O Lord, don't look at just their deeds,' he prayed,
 'Beloved, please give them a hand in aid.
 O You Whose hand controls both land and sea,
 Bring them ashore, back to security.
 O Generous, Merciful, Eternal One,
 Overlook wicked things they might have done!
 O You Who've given eyes and ears for free
 And intellect and wisdom needlessly,
 Giving before it had been earned, though You 2215
 Have faced ingratitude and error too,
 You can forgive the major sins we bring,
 Great Lord, beneath the shelter of Your wing.
 We've burned ourselves because of lust and greed;
 We've learned from You this prayer we make in need—
 We deeply honour You for teaching it
 And for the lamp that in the dark You've lit.'
 He prayed these words as he was standing there,
 Like mothers do for children in their care.
 Tears then began to flow out of each eye; 2220
 While unaware, his prayer rose to the sky:
 The prayer of him who isn't self-aware
 Differs: not him but God recites that prayer.
 God says the prayer, for this man is effaced:
 Its answer comes from God too, if it's traced.
 Without an intermediary in creation
 How can one fathom such a supplication?
 God's slaves are merciful and are long-suffering;
 They show God's nature while they are reforming,

Generous without a bribe, and helpful too, 2225
 Remaining in the worst times just as true.
Seek out this group before you're next distressed,
 Afflicted man, judge them a treasure-chest.

The hero's breath released the ship, but they
 Thought they'd done it themselves still anyway,
They thought at this most dangerous moment still
 Their arrow struck the aim through their own skill.
Foxes' legs save them during hunting season,
 They credit though their tails for no good reason,
And play with them so fondly, thinking: 'They 2230
 Saved our lives in the ambush yesterday.'
Fox, save your tail from brickbats. A mere tail,
 When you have no legs, is of no avail.

We're foxes, Friends of God our legs who save
 Us from so many dangers that are grave.
Our subtle scheming is our tail, and we
 Make love to it each day continually:
We wag our tails with our argumentation,
 To dazzle men and win their admiration.
We want to dazzle people constantly 2235
 And lustfully grab at divinity,
To rule hearts with mere spells—but there's a hitch:
 We can't see that we're stuck deep in a ditch.
You wretch, you're in a ditch despite your airs—
 Keep your nose out of other men's affairs!
Once you have reached a lovely garden, you
 Can then lead other people up there too.
You live in the material world's cramped gaol,
 And try to guide the rest to no avail.
You serve the donkey, kissing its backside 2240
 Yet try to lead us to that place with pride!
Serving God didn't suddenly appear
 In you, so how did lust for rule reach here.

You have tied cords around yourself just to
 Make everyone say 'Bravo!' now to you.
 Fox, leave this tail of tricks and cunning things—
 Entrust your heart now to the mystic kings.
 A lion's protection guarantees you meat,
 So don't rush to a carcass now to eat!
 You'll start to love God at that moment, soul, 2245
 When you move like a part back to its whole.
 God said, 'We watch the heart and do not pay
 Heed to the form of water and mere clay.'
 You answer, 'I too own a heart, you know.'
 Real hearts are higher than God's own throne though:
 There's water in dark mud across the land,
 But that's not suitable to wash your hand,
 For it's been spoiled by mud, so don't you start
 To claim your heart is also a real heart.
 Hearts loftier than the heavens are possessed 2250
 By Abdals and the Prophets, not the rest.
 Cleansed of soil, theirs is purified and it
 Has grown to be complete, immaculate.
 Abandoning soil, it has now reached the sea;
 It's oceanic—from soil's gaol it's free.
 Our water, though, is trapped in mud today—
 Ocean of mercy, draw us out of clay!
 The ocean says, 'I'd drag you here somehow,
 But you pretend you are sweet water now.'
 Your own pretence blocks you—give up that view 2255
 And come out into me, as I draw you.
 Water in mud desires to join the sea,
 But mud still pulls its feet back stubbornly—
 If water frees its feet from mud's grip, then
 Mud is left dry, and it is free again.
 What draws from mud the water, friend of mine?
 Attraction to the mystic sweets and wine.
 There is a very similar kind of lust
 For rank and wealth in this low realm of dust:
 Each one of these makes you intoxicated 2260
 And hangovers come when your lust's frustrated;

The hangover's ache proves your drunkenness
 Originates from sources valued less.
Don't take more of such things than you must do
 Or they'll soon conquer and rule over you.
You turned away; 'I have a heart!' you cried,
 'I am in union, with needs satisfied.'
Water in mud once turned away and said:
 'I am pure water—why should I seek aid?'
You reckoned that polluted thing a heart 2265
 And from the mystic lords kept it apart;
That thing loves milk and honey—do you feel
 It should be counted as a heart that's real?
Sweetness is the heart's shadow, so of course
 Each sweet thing gets this from the heart, its source.
The heart's the essence and the world is just
 Its accident, for which no heart can lust;
Can hearts love wealth and status like a fool
 Or be the captive of a muddy pool?
Or worship vain thoughts and imagination 2270
 For the sake only of good reputation?
The heart's naught but an ocean of pure light;
 It's where you see God—how can it lack sight?
The heart's not owned by everyone around,
 But just one person—where can he be found?
Forget those crumbs, seek a complete heart, friend!
 So yours will be a mountain in the end.
The heart encompasses all being; you'll see
 It scatter gold through generosity—
It scatters blessings through its own volition 2275
 From God, to reach the world's whole population.
All gold that the heart scatters is collected
 By those whose skirts are ready and corrected;
Your skirt's your desperate need for God, no less—
 Don't place in it your store of wickedness,
Or else it might get torn by that mistake—
 Then you won't tell a real coin from a fake.
You've filled your skirt with worldly stones, a few
 Being gold and silver, just as children do.

They are imaginary, since there's no gold; 2280
 Your skirt got torn and grief increased tenfold.
 How can a stone be seen as a mere stone
 By children till their brain makes this fact known?
 The *pir** is wisdom, not mere greying hair,
 Which cannot reach their realm beyond compare.

*That group disapprove of the supplication and intercession
 by Daquqi and fly away, disappearing beyond the veil over
 the Unseen. Daquqi becomes bewildered, asking: 'Did they
 disappear into the air or into the ground?'*

Once the ship had been rescued fully there
 The congregation finished then their prayer.
 They started murmuring what soon grew clearer:
 'Who was that busybody interferer?'
 Each one of them would speak up critically, 2285
 Hidden then from the ears of Daquqi,
 Saying, 'It wasn't me who made that prayer
 To God to save that boat with special care.'
 One added, 'That prayer leader through despair
 Interfered by performing such a prayer.'
 Another said, 'You're right; it seemed to me
 Exactly as you've thought it all to be.
 He interfered because grief left him pained,
 And tried now to oppose what God ordained.'
 Daquqi thought, 'When I now looked behind 2290
 To try to find out what was on their mind,
 I couldn't see there any of them—they
 Had somehow all just disappeared away:
 Neither above, below, the left, or right,
 I couldn't spot them anywhere in sight,
 As if they were such pearls that melt away
 Without a footprint or dust tracks that stay.
 That moment they'd all entered in God's dome—
 Into which meadow did that flock then roam?
 I stayed perplexed and wondered how God hid 2295
 That group from my eyes suddenly as he did.'

The way that fish dive into streams—they too
Became concealed so quickly from his view.
He grieved the loss of them for many years,
And out of longing shed so many tears.
We might well think, ‘How should God’s slave be seeing
Alongside God his fellow human being?’
The ass collapses here, for you saw all
Of them as merely flesh and not of soul.
The whole affair is ruined, immature man, 2300
For, like the vulgar, you saw them as human.
You looked at them in wretched Satan’s way
When he said, ‘I’m of fire, while he’s of clay.’*
Close your Satanic eye for just one moment!
On seeing external forms why be insistent?

Stop your sore eyes from streaming—don’t despair,
Daquqi, seek such men out everywhere.
To gain good fortune seeking is the start;
Paths open when your wish consumes your heart.
Detached from this world, with no thought to spare 2305
For it, and cooing dove-like to ask, ‘Where?’*
Veiled one, consider well this observation:
God linked ‘I’ll answer’* to Man’s supplication.
The prayer of the pure heart is ailment-free;
It reaches the Great Lord of Majesty.

*A further explanation of the story about the one who, in the time
of David, sought a lawful livelihood without exertion or toil,
and how his prayer was answered*

I’ll now recall for you an earlier tale:
A pauper day and night would moan and wail,
Begging God for a lawful sustenance
That won’t require hunts, work, or effort once.
About some of its aspects I have told, 2310
But the postponement has become fivefold.

We'll mention it now too—where can it go,
 When, from the clouds, God's wisdom pours below.
 The owner of the cow screamed furiously:
 'You who have shown my cow such cruelty,
 Explain to me why you have murdered her;
 For once be decent, stupid pilferer!'

'I faced the Lord's direction', that man said,
 'And begged him in my prayer for daily bread.
 My old, decrepit prayer drew a response:

2315

I killed it as that was my sustenance.'
 The owner grabbed his collar violently,
 Then punched his face a while impatiently.

The two adversaries go before David

To Prophet David he then dragged the pauper,
 Saying, 'Come with me wretched, stupid robber!
 Leave your proofs, bastard! They will not convince.
 Wake up again! Use some intelligence!
 What prayer? What are you mumbling now at me?
 Do not insult and mock my dignity!'

'In saying that prayer', then the pauper said,

2320

'Inside I've suffered; a high price I've paid.
 I'm sure my prayer was answered in that way,
 So beat yourself, foul-mouthed one! Go away!'

The owner shouted, 'Muslims, gather round
 To witness drivell from one who's unsound—
 For God's sake, how can what belongs to me
 Through prayer become instead his property?
 If that were true, the whole world could use prayers
 To claim another's property as theirs.

If that were true, blind beggars could change then

2325

Into fine princes and rich noble men—
 They make such supplications day and night:
 "God give to us!" they beg without respite,
 "Unless You give, no one will give at all.
 Opener, open the lock!" the beggars bawl.

Prayer is the means in which the blind must trust,
But they receive naught but a stale loaf's crust.'
The people said, 'The truth is what we're hearing;
The other one with prayers is profiteering!
How can prayer be possession's proof and cause? 2330
When was this part of the Shariah's laws?
Something becomes yours through donation, sale,
Bequest, and gift, or it's of no avail.
Where is this new law? Cite the page as well!
Give back the cow or it's the prison cell!'
He looked up at the sky, 'No one but You
Knows the reality and what is true.
It's You who put inside my heart that prayer
And raised a hundred hopes inside of there—
My claim's not idle, though that's how it seems; 2335
Like Prophet Joseph I had seen some dreams.'
Joseph had seen the sun and stars prostrate
Before him, though that is a servant's trait.
He trusted in his dream, so in the well
And prison, he sought naught else—time would tell.
That reassurance spared him from distress
In slavery, blame, and owning more or less.
He would rely on that dream, which shone bright
Just like a glowing candle to his sight.
When Joseph was thrown down the well, a cry 2340
Came down to reach his pure ears from on high:
'You will become a king one day, and then
You'll rub injustice in their face again.'
The One who said this wasn't visible,
But to the heart He was perceptible:
Much strength, support, and inner peace he found
Inside his soul due to that speech's sound.
This strength helped him endure contentedly
Whatever came his way of tragedy.
A feast and rosebush soon replaced that well; 2345
Abraham's fire changed just like this as well.*
The way Alast's deep question gave a savour
That keeps believers' hearts content forever;

They never struggle to resist affliction,
 Nor feel upset due to God's prohibition.
 Rose syrup shall consume the bitter taste
 Of portions of God's will that they have faced.
 But those without rose syrup as digestive
 Will vomit morsels that they find repulsive.
 Whoever's dreamed once of Alast's fine day 2350
 Is drunk entirely on devotion's way—
 Like drunken camels, he now bears his sack
 Without doubts, flagging, or becoming slack.
 His mouth foams too with holy testimony,
 As proof he's drunk and lovesick genuinely.
 This camel has become now lion-strong
 Through eating little food for very long.
 For the she-camel numerous fasts he'll bear;
 A mountain he'll regard a strand of hair.
 One who has not dreamed of Alast meets failure: 2355
 In this world they lack mystical endeavour.
 Instead he'll vacillate much, still unclear,
 Thanking God, then complaining for a year,
 Forward then backward on religion's way,
 Uncertain, vacillating every day.
 I owe you help, so you can understand—
 Listen one moment: *'Did we not expand?'**

The explanation's limitless, so now
 Let's go back to the man who claimed the cow:
 The one who killed it prayed, 'That fake called me 2360
 Blind due to this, and spoke unfaithfully.
 When have I ever prayed like blind men plead
 Or shown to anyone but God my need?
 To men, in ignorance, the blind make pleas;
 I want just You, You Who make hardship ease.
 He's blind, but thinks I am. He cannot see
 My neediness and deep sincerity.
 My blindness is because of love, the kind
 Mohammad said *"makes people deaf and blind"*.

I'm blind to all apart from God. I see 2365
Through Him—this is what love makes necessary.
God, You can tell that I'm not blind at all.
I circle round Your Grace, Pivot of all.
To truthful Joseph, dreams of this rare sort
You showed and they became his firm support—
Your Grace has shown to me a dream that way;
My ceaseless prayer was not just pointless play.
Those people didn't know my secret. They
Consider as mere drivel what I say.
That's their right, for just God knows the Unseen; 2370
He hides our flaws, but knows all that has been.'
'Look at me! Tell the truth!' the owner said,
'Why are you looking at the sky instead?
You are deceiving and committing fraud,
Claiming love and proximity to God.
What nerve you have to face the sky above!
Your heart is deaf, so how can it feel love?'
This caused a clamour to rise all around,
While that man put his head down to the ground
To pray, 'O God, don't put this slave to shame— 2375
Don't show my soul, even if I'm to blame!
You know all aspects—those long nights when I
In neediness would call on you and cry.
Though this to them has no worth, in your sight
This is a burning torch that still shines bright.'

David listens to the two adversaries and interrogates the accused

When Prophet David finally came out,
He asked, 'What is this quarrel all about?'
'Prophet of God, be just!' the plaintiff said,
'We found my cow in this man's house instead.
Please ask him why he dared to kill my cow— 2380
Demand an explanation from him now.'
David told him, 'Speak up and answer me:
Why did you ruin this man's property?

Don't spout out nonsense, but bring evidence,
 So that this case can be resolved at once.'
 'O Prophet David,' the accused man said,
 'For seven years all day and night I prayed:
 "O God give lawful sustenance!" I'd pray,
 "Which won't need me to struggle any way."
 Everyone knows about my wailing, and 2385
 Children can give accounts too, at first hand.
 Ask anyone you please, and you'll hear then
 The truth without the need to torture men.
 Ask openly, and then in secret too:
 "What did that ragged beggar say to you?"
 After all of my groans and constant prayer,
 A cow appeared in my home from thin air.
 My eyes dimmed, not because of food, for I
 Instead felt joy my prayer drew that reply.
 I killed it, to give it in thanks instead 2390
 To Him Who knows and heard the prayer I said.'

Prophet David gives judgment against the killer of the cow

David said, 'Wash away such talk at once
 And show your argument's firm evidence
 Without such proof would you permit me to
 Establish a wrong precedent for you?
 Who gave you it? Did you buy or inherit?
 Are you a farmer? How then will you profit?
 Earning is just like farming: you must sow
 The seeds to claim the plants that later grow.
 You only reap what has been sown by you, 2395
 Otherwise claims against you are all true.
 Go and pay that man! Don't lie or pretend!
 Get a loan if you must. My rules won't bend.'
 He answered, 'King, when you say I'm to blame,
 Don't you know wicked men said just the same?'

*The pauper prayed earnestly to God against
David's judgment*

He then prostrated, praying: 'God, please show
To David's heart my burning, which you know!
Put in his heart what into mine You sent
Secretly, Lord. You are munificent.'
He wept aloud then, hoping desperately 2400
That David's heart might feel some sympathy.
David replied, 'You who want back your cow,
Give me some peace; ease off a little now,
So I can be alone and ask in prayer
God, Who knows all the facts of each affair.
I'm used to His attention when I pray.
"My joy's in ritual prayer"* fits what I say.
My own soul's window's open; purity
Brings God's Book with no intermediary.
The Book, the rain, and light all enter in 2405
My house through it, from where they all begin.
Call windowless homes "hell"—that is their name;
To make such windows is our faith's main aim—
Don't use your axe to make things other than
A window like this if you're a real man.
Or don't you know that solar rays in view
Reflect the Unseen Sun's rays veiled to you.
You've only seen the light that beasts can see,
So how then was *Man honoured?** Answer me.
Just like the sun, I'm plunged as well in light 2410
And can't discern myself, try as I might.
My solitude and going off to pray
Is just to teach the people here the way.
I'd do things wrongly to make this world right—
The Prophet's saying "*War's a cheat*" sheds light.
There's no permission, otherwise we'd see
It pour out of the Sea of Mystery.'
David continued speaking in this way,
Making men's brains desire to burn away

He felt his collar grabbed at suddenly, 2415
 And heard: 'I don't dispute God's unity.'
 He came back to his wits and stopped his speech,
 Then left for a retreat beyond their reach.

David goes into seclusion so that the truth is revealed

David then closed the door. Alone in there
 He hurried to the niche to say a prayer.
 God showed him the whole story and he learnt
 Just who deserved to get the punishment.
 The litigants came back on the next day,
 Forming a line in front of him. Their fray
 Continued as before: each one would scream, 2420
 Cursing the other one to the extreme.

David gives judgment against the owner of the cow, saying he should withdraw his case about the cow, and the owner condemns David

David said to the plaintiff: 'Leave here now.
 Absolve this man concerning your old cow;
 Seeing as God has covered up for you,
 Give the right to discretion to him too.'
 He screamed, 'What kind of justice? Woe is me!
 Is this new law made for me specially?
 Your justice's fame left, and now it flies,
 Perfuming distant lands and different skies.
 Blind dogs get treatment that is far more just; 2425
 Mountains, at this, would crumble into dust.'
 Like this he kept on cursing publicly:
 'Everyone wake up to this tyranny!'

*David gives judgment against the owner of the cow, saying:
 'Give all you own to him!'*

David then told the plaintiff, 'Stubborn man,
 Give him your wealth as quickly as you can,

Or it will be worse still. I have told you
So he can't bring your cruelty in plain view.'
He poured dust on his own head, ripped his garment,
And said, 'You make the cruelty worse each moment.'
He then reproached pure David as before, 2430
So David chose to summon him once more.
'Since it was not your fortune,' David said
'Your wickedness will now be shown instead.
You climbed the ranks by shitting as you pass—
May twigs and hay be saved from such an ass!
Begone! Your wife and children from today
Will be his slaves. Don't speak, but just obey.'
He slammed a rock against his breast and ran
Up and down stupefied, a desperate man.
Others came to complain too, unaware 2435
Of all the hidden facts of this affair.
How could those mocked by lust as if they're straw
Tell wronged from guilty just by what they saw?
Tyrant and victim are distinguished by
One who has chopped his self, so it will die.
The tyrant is that self. Insanity
Will make it be each victim's enemy.
Always that dog attacks a desperate man;
It wounds such men as wildly as it can.
Lions feel shame, but not dogs. Lions don't prey 2440
On their own neighbours in a dog-like way.
The victim-killing, tyrant-loving pack
Harangued him in their dog-self's wild attack—
Confronting David, they said, 'Chosen one,
Prophet who feels the pain of everyone,
This is unworthy of you and unfair;
You've punished someone guiltless—don't you care?'

*David resolves to summon the people to a field, in order to
reveal the hidden truth and end all arguments*

David said, 'Friends, the time has come to show
You all this hidden secret, so you'll know.

Arise all of you, and we'll go to see 2445
 The truth about this hidden mystery.
 There is a huge tree in a certain plain
 With branches arched like roofs to block the rain,
 And like a tent with pegs entrenched in mud—
 From its deep roots I sense the smell of blood.
 At this fine tree there was a most foul murder—
 This wretched man in cold blood killed his master.
 God's clemency till now kept it concealed;
 Ingratitude means it will be revealed.
 He paid that master's family no heed, 2450
 Neither on the New Year, nor even Eid.
 He didn't try to bring them food at all;
 His debt to them he chose not to recall.
 This wicked man because of just one cow
 Knocked his descendants to the ground till now.
 He's lifted by himself the veil which hid
 His sin—the Lord had hidden what he did.'
 Infidels in this age, when woe prevails,
 Tear open by themselves their own sins' veils.
 Wrongdoing is kept secret by the soul, 2455
 Yet the wrongdoer will expose it all,
 Boasting, 'Look here—I've grown new horns now too!
 Behold, the bull of hell is in plain view!'

*Hands, feet, and tongue testify concerning the hidden truth
about the cruel person even in this world*

Even here now your hands and feet won't lie;
 About your misdeeds they will testify.
 Your conscience then advises you this tack:
 'Divulge what you believe and don't hold back!'
 In angry arguments especially,
 It hangs your secrets out for all to see.
 Since your adviser was your cruel oppression, 2460
 Which said, 'Now hands and feet give a confession';
 And since your secret's witness leads you, then
 While raging for revenge against all men,

The One Who makes your conscience direct you
Can raise your secret's banner in plain view.
On Judgment Day That One can still create
More supervisors to divulge your state.
You who've shown spite and cruelty and won't rest
Will not need this—your nature's manifest.
For cruelty you don't need more infamy— 2465
They know your fiery conscience intimately.
Your soul each second flashes new sparks out,
'I'm from the men of fire!' it longs to shout.
I'm part of fire, returning to my whole,
Not light, which goes to God like a pure soul.*

The one who failed to recognize God now
Had hidden things because he stole the cow.
He'd taken cows and camels from the other—
The self's like this—cut your ties to it, brother!
To God he never showed humility, 2470
And never wept, 'O Lord, do this for me:
Make my own victim happy through Your Grace;
If I harmed him, give him gain in its place!
If I've escaped, my blood-price then will be
On You my guardian for eternity.'
For that pearl he won't even give a stone;
The self's injustice is what we make known.

The People go out to that tree

When all the people finally reached the tree,
David said, 'Bind his hands fast now for me,
To show his sin and crime to all of you 2475
And raise the flag of justice right here too.
He left the other's grandfather for dead;
This slave thereby became a lord instead.
You killed your master, then you took away
His property—God's shown this clear as day.
Your wife had been his handmaid previously,
But treated him with you so grievously.

Whatever child she bore from him, each one
 Is now his heir, each daughter and each son.
 You are a slave; your wealth is really his. 2480
 You sought the law—take it, for here it is.
 You killed your master cruelly over there
 While he kept on appealing, “Please beware!”
 You buried then your knife here with much haste,
 Due to the scary phantom which you faced.
 Behold! The weapon and his skull are here—
 Dig up the ground and it will soon appear.
 You’ll find etched on the knife this vile dog’s name—
 He’d schemed to harm his master with no shame.’
 They dug a hole, as ordered, in the ground, 2485
 And very soon the knife and skull were found.
 They started screaming, shocked at what they’d found,
 Severing doubt’s girdle that they’d tightly bound.
 ‘Come, justice seeker, now!’ David then said,
 ‘Take your own justice with your vile, shamed head!’

David orders retribution against the murderer after his conviction

David ordered equal reprisals then.
 God’s knowledge can’t be overcome by men.
 Though we gain from God’s kindnesses, He will
 Expose us if we overdo it still.
 Blood never sleeps; in every heart one finds 2490
 Desire to solve what challenges all minds.
 Persistence from God’s own preordained plan
 Brings it forth from the conscience of each man.
 They ask, ‘What happened to him? He’s okay?’
 Just as the plant will sprout from soil one day,
 Boiling of blood provokes investigation,
 Through pricking consciences and plain discussion.
 Once that man’s deeds were shown, though none had guessed,
 The miracle was doubly manifest.
 Bareheaded people came from all around 2495
 And humbly touched their foreheads to the ground:

'We've acted just like the congenitally blind,
Though we'd seen wonders from you of this kind:
Once you were spoken to by a mere stone,
Saying: "Take me with you to Saul. Don't go alone!"
You went with just a sling and three stones there,
Slew thousands with a shot beyond compare:
Your stones would shatter, forming thousands more,
Each slaying there a foe;* and years before
Iron became wax in your hands when you 2500
Made chain-mail you'd been specially taught to do.*
Mountains were Prophets through your revelation,
The Psalms, as experts in their recitation.*
A million inner eyes were granted vision
And, through your breath, could see realms that are hidden.
That miracle's your strongest—it's abided;
Eternal life's the gift that you've provided.
This is the heart of every miracle—
It gives the corpse an everlasting soul.'
The killing of that wicked man too gave 2505
Life to a world: each was again God's slave.

Explanation of how Man's carnal soul is in the position of the murderer who made a claim regarding the cow, and how the killer of the cow is the higher intellect, and how David represents God or the shaikh, who is God's representative, with whose strength and support it is possible to kill the wicked, and become enriched by sustenance that is neither earned through work nor calculated

Kill your self! Bring the world back from the dead.
It killed its lord; make it your slave instead.
The one who claimed the cow is self—take heed!
It dressed itself as a lord fit to lead.
Its killer is your higher intellect,
Your flesh's slayer which you can't reject.
This intellect's held captive, and its wish
Is daily bread, without toil, on a dish.
What does its wish from God depend on now? 2510
Slaying the source of evil: that same cow.

'How dare you kill my cow?' the self will say—

The self's cow is the body's form in clay.

The master's son, intellect, is in need.

The murderous self claims mastery's right to lead.

What then is daily bread without toil, friends?

Prophetic mystic nourishment God sends.

Killing the cow is what this hangs upon.

The treasure's in the cow—learn, curious one!

I must have eaten something strange last night 2515

Not to hand all the reins now to your sight.

'I've eaten something' isn't really true—

All comes from secret precincts down to you.

We look at secondary causes—why

When we've learnt glancing from His flirting eye?

Above these causes are those that are higher—

Look only at those causes, which come prior.

Prophets came down to sever lower ones

And fling their miracles to distant suns.

Without need for a cause, they parted seas; 2520

Without once farming, they brought wheat with ease;

Through them, sand turned to flour fit for a feast,

Goat hair to silk as soon as it was fleeced.

Cutting the cause is the Qur'an's aim, friend,

Through paupers' gains and Abu Lahab's end.

Birds each drop on an army one small stone,

Defeating all those troops by this alone;

The stones of those birds caused their elephant

To fall with wounds—that poor beast bore the brunt.*

'Strike the slain man with that cow's tail!'^{*} God said, 2525

'So in the shroud he'll come back from the dead,

So you'll see him jump up whose throat was slit,

Seeking revenge from that one who did it.'

In such ways, the Qur'an throughout so well

Cuts secondary causes off. Farewell!

The meddling intellect's of no avail—

Become a slave to see this all unveil.

Philosophers are bound by reasoning;
The pure ride intellect just like a king;
Your intellect's own intellect and it 2530
Are core and husk which for a beast is fit;
Husks don't attract those seeking kernels, which
Are lawful for the good, the spiritually rich.
Your intellect needs proof, for it to see;
That intellect has constant certainty.
Your intellect fills notebooks very soon;
That intellect spreads light far like the moon.
That one's beyond what's black and white—to start
The light of its moon rises in your heart.
If power's gained by what is black and white, 2535
It's from the Night of Power's* star-bright light.
A purse's value is in gold like this,
Without which every purse is valueless:
The soul is what decides the body's value;
The soul's worth's fixed by rays God shines upon you.
If souls without rays are alive, would He
Have said that infidels *are dead*?* Tell me!
Speak, for His eloquence digs out a river,
So water will reach generations after.
Each generation's brought its own report; 2540
Still sayings of past sages give support.
The Torah, Psalms, and Bible testified
That the Qur'an contained the truth inside.*
Seek daily bread without toil, schemes, or price,
So Gabriel brings you fruit from paradise.
Better still, get it straight from God, my brother;
Don't make the gardener sow or suffer bother.
Bread has worth since it is His gift to you;
Without the husk as means, it helps you too.
Bread's taste's hidden; its form's like cloths we spread; 2545
Without a tablecloth comes God's Friend's bread.
How will the daily bread for which you've tried
So hard come down, except through your own guide?
When the self sees you walk in harmony
With him, it will obey then totally.

That slain cow's owner finally confessed
 On seeing David's breath was specially blessed.
 Higher intellect prevails, it must be said,
 Over your self, with the guide's special aid.
 The self's a snake with tricks of many kinds, 2550
 The guide's face is the emerald that blinds.*
 If you want the cow's owner to submit,
 Drive his self like a donkey, goading it—
 When to a Friend of God it should move near,
 Its long tongue's shortened, so we need not hear.
 It has a hundred tongues, which each possess
 Ten languages, much fraud, and cleverness.
 The claimant of the cow's the self: proficient
 In using proofs, but they are all deficient.
 He hoodwinks all the people gathered there, 2555
 But he can't trick the king who is aware.
 The self holds the Qur'an in one hand, brother,
 With a sharp dagger hidden in the other.
 Don't you believe in its hypocrisy!
 Shun its Qur'an, avoid its company!
 It takes you to perform ablutions to
 A spring, then shoves you in without ado.
 The luminous intellect seeks with such skill—
 How can the dark self dominate it still?
 Since it's at home and intellect's the stranger: 2560
 At its own door a dog's a frightening danger.
 But such blind dogs will be obedient when
 The mystic lions reach their home again.
 Ordinary men can't see the self's deceit—
 Heart inspiration's needed for that feat.
 He who is just like it is its associate,
 But not your David-mannered guide who knows it:
 He's been transformed; whoever God should place
 In the heart's station leaves their form and space.
 People have flaws within that will jump out; 2565
 Flaws will attract each other there's no doubt.
 Impostors claim, 'I'm David for our people!'
 The undiscerning man is their disciple.

The stupid bird hears hunters' whistles and
Flies to them, as it cannot understand
Or tell what's real from fiction—he's astray;
Even if he looks spiritual, run away!
To him a graft and what grows naturally
Are one—he doubts, though he claims certainty.
Even if he's the cleverest of his school, 2570
Since he can't now discern, he's still a fool.
As deer flee from a lion, run away—
Don't rush to him like fools might do today.

How Jesus fled to the mountain-top from a fool

Jesus fled to a mountain as if he
Were being chased by lions ravenously.
Someone pursued him saying, 'It's okay!
No one is coming. Why then rush away?'
He kept on hurrying and due to haste
Gave no reply—he had no time to waste.
That man pursued him further, then he shouted: 2575
'For God's sake, Jesus, whom we've never doubted,
Please stop for just a moment! Won't you, please?
Your fleeing gives me deep anxieties.
Running up there, from whom do you now flee?
No lion's in pursuit, no enemy.'
'I'm fleeing from a fool!' Jesus explained,
'I now must save myself, not be restrained.'
The man asked, 'Aren't you the Messiah then,
The one who heals all deaf and all blind men?'
Jesus said, 'Yes.' 'And aren't you that king who 2580
Possesses spells from the Unseen Realm too?
When you chant spells on corpses, suddenly they
Jump up like lions pouncing on their prey.'
Jesus said, 'Yes, that's I.' 'Don't you create
Living birds from mere clay with power so great?'
Jesus said, 'Yes.' 'Then, Holy Spirit, who
Can scare one who can do the things you do?

Who in the world could see these signs you gave
And not desire at once to be your slave?'

Jesus said, 'By God's holy essence, He 2585

Who made our bodies made souls previously;
And by His attributes and essence too,

Which heavens love the way that madmen do,
Since that spell and God's greatest name, which I
Pronounced on deaf and blind men, ranks so high:

Their power made the mountain split in haste,
Tearing its cloak apart down to its waist;

They made a corpse revive in just an instant
And non-existents to become existent.

I have pronounced them over one fool's heart 2590

Numerous times, but healing just won't start.

He turned to stone and wouldn't change—God knows

He is now sand from which not one plant grows.'

The man then asked, 'Will you now make it clear

Why God's name failed to be effective here?

There's sickness here just like those sicknesses:

It healed before—why didn't it cure this?'

'Folly's disease is God's wrath,' Jesus said,

'Blindness and such aren't wrath but trials He's made;

A trial attracts God's mercy to such woes, 2595

But folly only can attract more blows.

That which is branded on him God has sealed,

So such a person never can be healed.'

As Jesus did, from fools you have to flee;

Carnage results from foolish company.

The air steals flowing water bit by bit,

And fools make faith evaporate like it.

They steal your warmth to give you chills—beware,

They'll sneakily put sharp rocks on your chair.

It wasn't due to fear he fled from reach— 2600

Jesus can feel secure; it was to teach.

If frost fills all horizons with its chill,

It cannot harm the sun which rises still.

*Story about the People of Sheba and their folly,
and how the advice of Prophets has no effect
on the foolish*

Remember Sheba's people's woe: their breeze,
Through stupid fools' breaths, filled up with disease.
Sheba resembled that huge city in
The children's tales passed down among your kin.
Children like telling fables to each other,
But they hold hidden wisdom too, my brother.
In tales there's idle chatter in some measure; 2605
One also must search ruins to find treasure.
There once was a grand city, they relate,
Which only was as big as a side-plate.
It was so huge and broad—what a dominion,
Extremely big, the same size as one onion.
The people of ten cities filled that place,
Totalling three, each with a dirty face.
Inside were countless people, but just three
Raw beggars were in that locality.
(The souls which to the Loved One do not race, 2610
Though many, count as half through their disgrace.)
One with good vision, but blind totally
To Solomon and ants' legs equally.
The second could hear well, and was deaf too,
Treasure which has no gold inside for you.
The third was bare—his genitals he'd show;
His skirt had such a very long hem though.
'An army's nearing. Look!' the blind one said.
'I know how many. I see them ahead.'
The deaf one said, 'I've heard the noise near me, 2615
What they say openly and secretly.'
The naked one said, 'I'm afraid of them,
For they might want to shorten my long hem.'
The blind one said, 'They're close. Let's not remain
For we'll be struck and bound then with a chain.'

The deaf man said, 'The noise is louder, so
 My friend it is our last chance now to go.'
 The naked one said, 'They'll cut my hem short.
 I'll be unsafe among that lustful sort.'
 They went out of that city due to fear 2620
 And hurried to a village that was near.
 They found a bird there that was very fat
 Without flesh on it—abject just like that;
 A withered bird, which from firm blows from crows
 Had bones like threads with which a tailor sews.
 They ate it like three lions on a hunt;
 Each felt as full as a huge elephant.
 All three became fat due to what they ate,
 Like three huge elephants all overweight.
 And due to the degree that they'd grown fat, 2625
 None could be fitted in this world like that.
 With their huge size and big limbs, they escaped
 Through small cracks in the door which now had gaped.
 The way to death for creatures is unseen;
 Since it has no place, it then can't be seen.
 Look, caravans now follow in succession,
 Through this crack in the door that is so hidden.
 You can't find that door's crack, for it's so small,
 Gateway to union, but invisible.

*Interpretation of the blind, far-sighted one, the deaf, sharp-eared
 one, and the naked one with a long skirt*

The deaf one's hope, which of your death has heard, 2630
 But of his own death has not heard a word.
 The blind one's greed: all others' flaws he sees
 And speaks of them in all vicinities.
 He can't see his own flaws because he's blind,
 Though everybody else's he can find.
 The naked one fears his skirt will be torn,
 But who would strike a man with nothing on?
 The worldly man is scared and penniless;
 Though he owns nothing, thieves cause him distress.

Naked he came and naked soon he leaves, 2635
Yet he's distressed and filled with dread of thieves.
At death's hour, dirges then will reach his ears
And his own soul will laugh at its past fears.
The rich man then finds out he has no gold,
The clever man no talent, truth be told.
With a child storing peel they are compared,
Who, like a rich man, for his horde feels scared;
If you take some, he'll cry in misery;
If you return it, he'll smile happily.
Since he lacks knowledge and is ignorant, 2640
His tears and laughter are irrelevant.
A man thought he possessed what was just loaned
And feared to lose what he thought that he owned.
He dreamed that it was all his property
And feared that there might be a robbery.
Once death pulled at his ears till he would wake,
He laughed at his fears, seeing the mistake.
That's like the scholars' trembling out of fear,
Since they have knowledge just of things down here.
Regarding these accomplished scholars, read 2645
In the Qur'an '*They do not know*'*—take heed!
Each fears that somebody will come and steal,
Thinking his knowledge is worth a great deal.
He says, 'They're wasting all my time,' but he
Doesn't have time of value actually.
'They've taken me away from work!' he'll say;
His soul is plunged in sloth, though, all the way.
'My skirt is long,' the bare man says in fear.
'How will I get it safely out of here?'
He views the sciences as valuable, 2650
But still has failed to understand his soul.
He knows the property of every substance,
But, like an ass, does not know his own essence.
'I know what's lawful and what's not,' he'll claim—
You don't know if you're lawful—feel some shame!
You know the licit and illicit well,
But are you licit? You can't even tell.

You know the cost of everything on earth,
 But not what you yourself are really worth.
 The lucky and unlucky stars you see, 2655
 But not which one you are, unfortunately.
 The point of every science is to convey
 To you who you will be on Judgment Day.
 You know the laws and creeds of your religion,
 But how good and how bad is your foundation?
 Your own foundation's worth more in the end,
 For finding out your origin, my friend.

*Description of the pleasantness of the City of Sheba
and their ingratitude*

At root the Sheba People were so rotten:
 They'd shun the means to reach God; they'd forgotten
 He gave them orchards, fields, and a huge mansion 2660
 On every side for their joy and expansion.
 The trees had so much fruit on them that they
 Would fall off on the ground and block the way:
 The windfall left the road below so blocked;
 The tons of fruit left travellers very shocked.
 Baskets on heads in the vicinity
 Would fill with falling fruits unwittingly.
 Wind scattered all those fruits around, not them—
 The fruits filled every person's waiting hem.
 Huge branches would hang down so low, and then 2665
 Be brushed by heads of all the passing men.
 And due to gold found there in such excess,
 Labourers would wear golden belts no less.
 The dogs would trample on cakes good to eat;
 Wolves could get stomach aches from too much meat.
 The town and village were now safe from robberies;
 Wolves didn't cause goats any more anxieties.
 If I were to record all bounties they
 Were given and which grew more *day by day*,
 It would then hinder matters more important— 2670
 The Prophet followed this: '*Be firm and constant!*'*

The Prophets came from God to counsel the People of Sheba

Then thirteen Prophets entered there, so they
 Could guide all of the lost men. They'd then say:
'Give thanks that bounty has been multiplied!
 If waking's steed sleeps, wake it!' these men cried.
'Thanking the Benefactor's necessary,
 So His wrath's door won't open suddenly.
Witness the generosity that's sent!
 Would your small thanks leave others still content?
He gives a head, so it will bow down low, 2675
 And legs to kneel in thanks He will bestow.'
'The ghoul has taken our thanks,' said the men—
 'We're weary now of giving thanks again.
Our weariness with His munificence
 Means we're not happy with obedience.
We don't want orchards, bounties most would treasure;
 We don't want every means and aid to leisure.'
The Prophets said, 'In your heart is a sickness;
 Your knowledge of God therefore suffers weakness—
All bounty from Him turns to more disease; 2680
 Food cannot strengthen men as sick as these.
Stubborn one, many sweet things came for you,
 Then turned unsweet, from pure to dirty too.
You were the foe of all things that were pleasant,
 And everything you touched would turn unpleasant.
Whoever then befriended you was seen
 By your eyes as contemptible and mean.
You viewed as someone who deserved deep reverence
 Whoever kept their distance from your presence.
This is one of that sickness's effects— 2685
 It poisons all things with which it connects.
You must fight that disease off very quickly,
 For it makes sugar seem to your eyes filthy.
Every sweet thing that comes to you will turn
 Unsweet—Water of Life, like fire, will burn.

That sickness aids your death and torment, friend;
 Due to it your own life will quickly end.
 Your heart has come alive through kinds of food
 That make your body rot—it does no good.
 Through coaxing many have been hunted—they 2690
 Seemed worthless, though, when they became your prey.
 When higher intellects become acquainted
 They gain within through love that is untainted;
 But when two base selves do this, then instead
 It brings about diminishment ahead,
 Because the self soon circles round the sickness
 And very quickly this corrupts your gnosis.
 If you don't want your friend to be a foe,
 Choose someone next who knows more than you know.
 Since you're sick, through the Simoom-self's effect* 2695
 Whatever you should touch you will infect.
 A jewel you'll change to stone; and then if you
 Touch the heart's love, this turns to hatred too.
 If you take a pure saying that is wise,
 It soon turns vile and tasteless to your eyes.
 You'll say, "I've heard this often. It's old, brother.
 If you're my helper, share with me another!"
 If something new should later come to you,
 The next day you'd grow weary of that too.
 Uproot the sickness, then each thing you hear, 2700
 Though it be old, will sound new to your ear;
 Fresh leaves will grow from that old tale—you'll see
 A hundred blossoms bloom on an old tree.
 We're soul-physicians, God's apprentices;
 The Nile *was parted** when its waves saw us.
 From other healers we're so far apart—
 They can't see through your pulse inside your heart.
 We view it with no intermediary;
 Clairvoyance gives us vantage-points to see.
 Those are physicians who give food and make 2705
 The animal soul stronger by mistake—
 We are physicians of your deeds and speech,
 Inspired by God's light ray within our reach.

We say, "These deeds will give you benefit,
But those deeds lead you far away from it.
This kind of talk will help you move ahead,
But that kind will cause harm to you instead."
Urine is those physicians' evidence,
Ours revelation from His eminence.
We don't request from anyone a fee—
God gave us so much gain most generously.
Incurable diseases rush to us—
Our remedy treats all the illnesses.'

2710

The community demanded miracles from the Prophets

The people said, 'You who claim Prophethood,
Where's proof you can heal and make bad things good?
Like us you have to sleep and eat, then lead
Your cattle to the field so they can feed.
Since you're trapped too in water and in clay,
How can you make our phoenix hearts your prey?
The lure of power and status lures men to
Make claims that they're new Prophets like you do.
Such lies and boasts will not be well received,
For we refuse to ever be deceived.'
'This is due to your sickness,' they replied,
'Blindness is vision's veil, and it will hide:
You've heard our call, but you can't understand
Or see the jewel we hold now in each hand;
This jewel's a test for people, which we turn
Around their eyes to see if they'll discern.
Demanding "Where's the proof?" shows you can't see
The jewel. You're trapped by blindness tragically.
If the sun says, "The day has come—arise!"
Would you dispute its words as though they're lies?
Would you say, "Where's your proof?" It would reply,
"Blind one, you should ask God now for an eye!"
If someone seeks a lamp in daylight, that
Tells us he is as blind now as a bat.

2715

2720

If you can't see, but guess aloud it's dawn,
 Despite the fact you're veiled, do not let on
 To everyone like this about your blindness. 2725
 Be silent, wait for God's grace and His kindness!
 To ask a man, "Where is the day?" at noon
 Will draw disgrace to yourself very soon.
 Silence and patience draws God's mercy, but
 Seeking proofs shows you are inadequate.
 Accept "*Be silent!*"* so that its reward
 Will come into your spirit from the Lord.
 If you don't want a relapse near Him, then
 Fling your wealth and your head down, sage of men.
 Sell your superfluous speech, buy sacrifice 2730
 Of status, wealth, and soul—that is the price
 For His grace to sing your praise, and thus make
 The heavens jealous of the rank you'll take.
 When you respect these healers' hearts at last,
 You'll feel ashamed of doubting in the past.
 Removing blindness is beyond all humans,
 Yet God guides you to honour your physicians—
 With all your souls become their devotees
 And thus be filled with musk and ambergris.'

The people are suspicious of the Prophets

The people said, 'It's fraud and trickery. 2735
 How should God make mere men His deputy?
 Kings' messengers must be of the same nature;
 Water and clay's so far from the Creator.
 Have we just eaten donkeys' brains, to view
 As close friends to the Homa gnats like you?
 How far apart, like God and earthen clay,
 Or motes and sunlight which make bright each day.
 Where's the resemblance? What connection binds
 That it should be believed by rational minds?

*Story about the hares who sent one hare to the elephant, telling him: 'Say that you are the ambassador of the moon in heaven come to warn him not to drink from that spring!' as it is told in full in Kalila and Dimna**

'This is like when the hare said, "It is true, 2740
I'm the moon's messenger and partner too":
When all the beasts of chase were suffering
Due to some elephants near their pure spring,
Deprived of water, they stayed barred so long
That they devised a trick, since they weren't strong.
From a hill's peak their chief called to invite
The elephants on the new moon's first night:
"Come here on the fourteenth, elephant king,
And you'll find evidence inside the spring.
King elephant, I'm the ambassador; 2745
Remember you can't blame the messenger.
The moon says, 'Elephants begone, and know
That that pure spring is ours. You must now go
Or else I'll turn you blind most wickedly.'
I've warned you, so the blame won't fall on me.
Agree to leave the spring—not one more word
Unless you want the moon to slash its sword.
The proof is that the moon's form splits and bursts
Each time an elephant comes there who thirsts.
King of the elephants, come here that night 2750
To see the proof at that spring in plain sight."
The herd's own king came when two weeks had passed
And drank from that same spring his very last—
On lowering his trunk inside the pool,
Water splashed and the moon seemed split. The fool
Believed the claim made earlier by the hare
Because the moon's reflection broke in there.
We're not like elephants that we should fear
The moon's reflection breaking up now here.'
'Oh dear, our spiritual counsel has instead 2755
Tightened their shackles!' all the Prophets said.

The Prophets answer their sneering and tell them parables

'Alas that the cure of your malady
 Has turned now to wrath's poison tragically.
 Our lamp has made your sight worse by surprise,
 Because God's placed wrath's blinkers on your eyes.
 What could we gain from you when we possess
 Dominion higher than the stars no less?
 How could the sea of pearls then benefit
 From a mere ship that has been stuffed with shit?
 Alas for that blind eye—the sun appears 2760
 As a mere mote, however much it nears.'
 Of Adam, who was peerless on that day,
 Satan's eye could perceive no more than clay.*
 The devilish eye sees winter when it's spring;
 It's drawn back home still from a different thing.
 Fortunes come down to the unfortunate,
 Yet stupidly they turn away from it.
 Beloveds come unrecognized, then go
 Unnoticed by the luckless who don't know.
 Privation makes men's eyes err tragically; 2765
 What turns their hearts is a bad destiny.
 Since a stone idol is a god for you,
 Blindness and curses naturally ensue.
 To partner God you deem stone suitable—
 Closeness to God you'll still deny Man's soul?
 A dead gnat fits the Homa's company—
 Can't living men then gain God's intimacy?
 You merely have concocted that dead thing;
 Living beings are created by the King.
 You're lovers of yourselves and what you've made; 2770
 Towards their own heads serpents' tails have prayed.
 That tail lacks grace and fortune, and there's no
 Delight or peace in that head even though
 The serpent's tail twists round its head—the two
 Both suit each other as all partners do.

In His divine book, Hakim Ghaznavi
Makes this point, if you listen carefully:
'With what fate has decreed don't interfere!
The donkey's body suits the donkey's ear.'
Bodies and limbs as well fit with each other, 2775
As attributes and souls belong together:
Its attribute suits perfectly each soul,
For God has made it one harmonious whole.
Since God's the One Who put them in their place,
They match as well as eyes in someone's face.
Ugly or fair, these attributes all fit;
Any words God writes are appropriate—
*Between two fingers** eyes and hearts of men
Are in the Writer's hand just like a pen.
The fingers are His wrath and His compassion; 2780
Their pen, the heart, contracts then feels expansion.
Pen, if you glorify the Lord, please view
Whose *pair of fingers** is now holding you.
The fingers give you motion and intention;
Your nib is now at a main intersection.
He alternates, like letters, your heart's states—
From Him all your intent originates.
Neediness and abasement work alone,
But not by every pen is this fact known.
Pens only know to their capacity, 2785
Shown through their good or bad activity.
The hare and elephant tale they would use
To mix eternity with a plain ruse.

*Explanation of why not everyone can give parables,
especially those concerning God*

Such parables can't be made by your sort
And then applied to that most holy court.
All parables belong to God, not you,
Like hidden knowledge and what's in plain view.
What do you know of the disguised intention,
Baldhead, that cheeks and tresses you should mention?*

Moses thought it a rod once by mistake; 2790
 Its hidden side then showed it was a snake.*
 When such a king mistook wood's hidden side,
 How can you see the snares with bait inside?
 Moses mistook that past similitude,
 How can mice see who meddle and intrude?
 He'll turn to dragons your analogies,
 And they will tear your body up with ease.
 Cursed Satan used analogies this way
 And was then cursed by God till Judgment Day.*
 Korah's analogy made him sink down 2795
 Into the soil with both his throne and crown.
 Deem your analogies as owls and crows—
 Hundreds of households were destroyed by those.

*Noah's community said parables in mockery when the ark
was being built*

Pure Noah built the ark in the parched desert.
 Parable-tellers chose to mock his effort:
 'Here in the desert, where one cannot find
 A well, he builds an ark—he's lost his mind!'

Another said, 'I hope your ship can run!'

'Make wings for it too!' joked another one.

Noah responded, 'This is God's decree 2800
 And won't be foiled by witty irony.'

*Story about the burglar who on being asked, 'What are you doing
at midnight at the base of this wall?' said 'I'm beating a drum'*

Now heed this parable: a thief one night
 Bored into a wall's base while out of sight.
 Someone sick was at midnight half-awake
 And heard the tapping sound the thief would make.
 He went up to his roof for a good view,
 Then asked, 'Mister, what are you trying to do
 At this late hour? I'd like this clarified.
 And who are you?' 'A drummer,' he replied.

‘What are you doing?’ ‘Drumming!’ said the thief. 2805
‘Where is its music? That’s beyond belief.’
‘You’ll hear its sound tomorrow, every yell,
Sigh, exclamation, and lament as well.’
That tale which you just heard about the hare
Was false, but of its truth you’re not aware.

*The answer to the parable that the unbelievers relate about
the hare being an ambassador with a message from the
moon in the sky*

Find out the secret meaning of the hare
Who came as an ambassador once there,
Depriving your dumb soul, which hardly thinks,
Of Water of Life that the great Khezr drinks.
You have perverted its true meaning, so 2810
Prepare yourself for unbelief’s earned blow.
The moon broke in the water’s image here
And that filled all the elephants with fear.
You tell this tale about the spring, the hare
And elephant whom they could easily scare,
But, blind, raw ones, how does this moon resemble
A moon that makes us helpless and most humble?
What is the moon, the sun, and the vast sky,
Intellects, souls, and angels up on high?
Ray of light from the sun what do I say? 2815
Surely I’m talking in my sleep today?
The wrath of mystic kings has wiped away
Millions of cities, you who are astray!
Into a hundred bits the mountains split;
Eclipses made suns helpless, desperate.
The wrath of such men makes the clouds turn dry
And has destroyed worlds which would reach so high.
Unembalmed corpses, turn around to see
Where punishment reached Lot’s community!*

What’s a mere elephant when birds alone 2820
Could easily pulverize its every bone.

Those *ababi** birds were so weak, but then
 The elephants could not stand up again.*
 Who hasn't heard of Noah's flood, my son,
 Or how the troops of Pharaoh were undone?*
 The spirit cast them into waves that tore
 Them to a hundred separate shreds and more.
 Who hasn't heard of Thamud's fate that day,
 And how the wind swept all the Aad away?*
 Look fondly at such elephants that kill 2825
 The other elephants that wish you ill.
 Those elephants and kings of tyranny,
 When facing wrath of hearts will always flee
 From darkness to more darkness: they forever
 Descend and find no mercy whatsoever.
 Maybe the news of good and bad missed you,
 Though everybody else heard of those two?
 You claim not to have seen what was made clear,
 But death will open your eyes to what's here.
 Suppose the world is filled with splendid light— 2830
 When you sink to a grave as dark as night
 No share of those strong rays stays in your view;
 Your window's blocked from generous moonbeams too.
 You've sunk down from the tower into the pit—
 Is it the world's fault that you're losing it?
 The soul remaining wolf-like stubbornly
 Will not see Joseph's face assuredly.*
 David's Psalms reached the rocky mountain's ear,
 But stony-hearted men still couldn't hear.*
 May mystic intellects be always blessed! 2835
And God knows what's the path that is the best.
Believe the Prophets, Sheba's people, and
The spirit captured by Him, understand!
Believe in them! They're rising suns and they
Will save you from disgrace on Judgment Day.
Believe them! They are full moons that are radiant,
Before they meet you at the Hour of Judgment.
Believe them! They're lamps in the dark. Don't mope,
But honour them; they are the keys of hope.

Believe them! They don't seek your wealth! Don't stray 2840

Nor try to lead the other men astray!

Abandon Arabic, in Persian say:

Be Indian slaves of Turks, you men of clay!

Heed testimonies that the kings will tell.

The heavens do believe—you should as well.

The meaning of prudence and the parable of the prudent man

Observe what was your predecessors' fates

Or fly through prudence to see what awaits.

What's prudence? Weighing up two plans you see,

To choose that furthest from insanity.

'No water's on this road,' one person says, 2845

'And there's foot-scorching sand for several days.'

Another says, 'What lies! Proceed; each night

You'll find a flowing fountain in plain sight.'

Prudence means taking water just in case,

Freed from concerns thus from what you might face.

If water is there, pour your own away;

If not, the stubborn ones will feel dismay.

O children of God's deputy, be fair!

Be prudent—now for Judgment Day prepare!

That foe showed your forefather so much spite 2850

Dragging him down to gaol from such a height,

Checkmating the heart's king with frightening ease,

From paradise down to calamities.

How often did he seize him in the fight

And pin him down to give him such a fright.

He did this to that champion, so don't view

Him as a weakling when compared with you.

That envious one could snatch so cleverly

Both of our parents' crowns and finery.

He left him wretched, bare, and desperate; 2855

Adam would weep for years, disconsolate,*

Such that a plant soon grew from every tear.

He wept, 'Why must I stay in Non-being here?'

The Devil's impudence reached the degree
 That he snatched such a great chief's dignity.
 Beware, materialists, of him! Instead
 With '*God give me strength!*'* chop off his vile head,
 Since from his hideout he now spies on you—
 Beware because he's hidden from your view.
 The hunter keeps on scattering seeds around— 2860
 They're seen, but traps are hidden underground.
 Wherever you should see a seed, beware!
 Don't let your wings get captured in a snare.
 The bird that sees seeds, but opts not to eat,
 Will eat seeds in the realm free from deceit,
 Feeling content with that and set free too
 From snares—its wings can move as they wish to.

*The unsoundness of the action of that bird which abandoned
prudence due to greed and lust*

A bird is perched there on the wall again,
 Eyes fixed upon the snare's alluring grain.
 It glances at the open field in view, 2865
 But turns around to that snare's grain anew;
 This glance and that one battle constantly
 And empty wisdom from birds suddenly.
 A different bird puts dithering aside
 And turns to that field where it may abide.
 Its happy wings must be congratulated,
 For it's the chief now of the liberated.
 Whoever follows it will gain salvation
 Through that security and liberation,
 Because its heart's the king of prudent fellows 2870
 Its home is in the rose gardens and meadows.
 Prudence is pleased with it and that is mutual—
 Act like this to avoid becoming rueful!
 Repeatedly you've fallen in greed's snare
 And let your throat be cut while unaware.
 Time and again Compassionate God has freed you,
 Accepted your repentance, brought you joy too:

‘Return like this and we will too,’ He said;

‘We match your actions with rewards ahead.*

When I draw one to me, I guarantee

2875

Its mate will follow soon and run to Me.

We’ve paired all actions with effects—it’s clear

Once one comes soon its partner will appear.’

A raider carries off a man, and then

His wife trails him to find her spouse again.

You’ve come once more to this snare, and have thrown

Dust in repentance’s eye—it is your own.

For you once more Forgiving God unbound

A knot and said, ‘Flee now, don’t look around!’

When heedlessness’s chief one more time came,

2880

It dragged your soul directly to the flame.

Moth, end forgetfulness and questioning!

Look just one time now at your own burned wing.

Once you’ve escaped, to give thanks means not to

Look back towards the grain that once drew you,

So that when you give thanks, He’ll then bestow

Daily bread free from fear about your foe—

To give thanks for that grace that set you free,

You must remember God’s grace constantly.

How many times, while suffering, you would cry:

2885

‘God, free me from the snare in which I lie,

That I may serve and always act with kindness,

Then throw dust at the Devil to cause blindness.’

Story about the vow made by dogs every winter: ‘When summer comes then we’ll build a house in readiness for winter’

Wintertime makes a dog’s bones draw together;

They’re made so small due to the frosty weather.

‘With such a tiny body’, he’ll then moan,

‘I soon must build a storehouse made of stone;

Once summer comes, I’ll build with my own paws

A storehouse to live in till winter thaws.

But when the summer comes, its bones stretch back

2890

And that dog’s skin is now no longer slack.

It sees itself fill out with its own eyes,
 Then asks, 'Which house can fit a dog my size?'
 It grows and drags its feet to somewhere shady,
 Now overfed, sharp, cowardly, and lazy.
 Its heart repeats, 'You must erect one now!'
 But it responds, 'How will I fit in? How?'
 When you feel pain, your greed's bones then contract
 Due to the struggles by which you feel racked.
 You say, 'I'll build a house in my contrition, 2895
 A winter refuge for my own protection.'
 But when your pain subsides, and you grow greedy,
 Like that dog you'll no longer then feel needy.
 To thank God tastes more sweet than grace bestowed;
 Thankers don't chase more or feel something's owed.
 Thanking is bounty's soul, bounty its shells,
 For thanking leads to where the Loved One dwells.
 Bounty makes people heedless, thanks aware—
 Hunt bounty with your thanks to Him as snare!
 The bounty of your thanks makes you content, 2900
 So you'll give to the poor more than you're sent;
 You'll eat your fill of God's meats and sweets too,
 So begging and going hungry both leave you.

*The deniers prevent the Prophets from giving counsel
and bring forward fatalistic arguments*

The Sheba People said, 'Preachers, it's clear
 You've said enough, if men have interest here—
 God's locked our hearts, so it's of no avail;
 Over Our Maker no one can prevail.
 That Artist has designed us in this way
 And this won't change no matter what you say;
 You're telling pebbles, "Turn to rubies now!" 2905
 Or something old to turn brand-new somehow;
 Or dust to turn to water, clear and runny,
 Or water to transform next into honey.
 He made the heavens and celestials,
 The water, earth, and all terrestrials.

He gave skies purity and turning; both
 Water and clay he gave dark hues and growth—
How should the heavens choose turbidity?
 Can clay and water then choose purity?
To each He has assigned a certain course; 2910
 Mountains can't turn to straw through their own force.'

The response of the Prophets to the fatalists

The Prophets said, 'God did make qualities
 That no one can escape; as well as these
He made some that are accidental too:
 A vile man can become thus good and true.
Stones won't transform to gold quite obviously,
 But copper turns to gold through alchemy.
You can't wish sand to turn into a rose,
 But soil can do that—watch as its stem grows.
He's given ailments with no remedy, 2915
 Like lameness and being blind congenitally,
But also those for which cures are in place,
 Like headaches and paralysis of the face.
He made those cures for harmony's sake; pain
 And remedy were not made just in vain.
Most ailments do have their own remedy—
 You'll find it if you seek it earnestly.'

The unbelievers repeat the arguments for fatalism

The people said, 'Listen, our malady
 Is not one for which there's a remedy.
You've uttered spells and counselled us for years, 2920
 Each moment strengthening locks upon our ears—
If it were possible to cure this sickness,
 Then some part of it would now be a bit less.
With hepatitis water's blocked from livers—
 It goes elsewhere, though you drink down vast rivers.

The hands and feet swell so you'll think they'll burst
 Yet all that water fails to quench your thirst.'

The Prophets' next response to them

The Prophets said, 'Despair is a disgrace,
 For there's no limit to God's boundless grace.
 With such a Benefactor don't lose hope! 2925
 Cling to His mercy's saddle-straps like rope.
 Many a plight was hard on the first day,
 But was relieved as hardships passed away.
 After despair, there's still hope, so be wise:
 After the darkness many suns will rise.
 I see you're now immovable as rocks
 And on your hearts and ears you have put locks,
 But your acceptance isn't our main mission—
 It's doing God's will in complete submission.
 He ordered us to do this service, so 2930
 We don't speak for our own sakes what we know.
 We have life just to follow His command—
 If he says to, we'd cultivate dry sand.
 A Prophet's soul has just God as companion;
 He disregards acceptance and rejection.
 He gives rewards for our delivery;
 For Him we'd turn vile like your enemy.
 We don't feel tired and weary at His court,
 That, due to distances, we should stop short.'

Weary, with heart closed, is that gloomy person 2935
 Distant from God, as if inside a prison.
 The Sought Beloved's with us nonetheless;
 Our souls are grateful for His kind largesse.
 Our hearts have fields of tulips and fine roses;
 They block away age and what decomposes.
 We stay forever fresh and delicate,
 Laughing, refined, sweet, and immaculate.

A hundred years and one hour, long and short—

We've naught to do with measures of that sort.

Length is for bodies and things physical;

2940

Such measures do not figure for the soul.

For those men in the cave, so many years

Was one day free from sorrow, harm, and tears.*

It seemed to them just one day in that story;

From non-existence soul returned to body.

When there's no day and night, or month and year,

None can feel sated, tired, or old, it's clear.

Non-existence's garden boasts pure selflessness,

So from God's grace there is much drunkenness.

Only the one who's tasted truly knows:

2945

Dung beetles can't conceive scent from the rose.

And if it were conceived, it would have then

Faded like everything conceived by men.

Can hell conceive of paradise? Then, how?

A fair face can't be witnessed on a sow.

Beware! Don't slit your own throat. Heed my tips,

For such a morsel is now near your lips.

I have now brought the hard ways to an end,

Making the way so easy for each friend.

*The community repeated their opposition to what
the Prophets hoped for*

'Though you bring for yourselves luck,' they replied,

2950

'You're our bad luck, rejected and defied.

Our souls were free from any cares, then you

Hurled us straight into pain and grief anew.

Your warning split a hundred times and more

Our concord and agreement from before.

Once parrots eating sugar, through you we

Have changed to birds who now think morbidly.

Wherever a grief-spreading tale is found,

Wherever ugly rumours spread around,

Wherever doom is forecast and mishaps,

2955

Chastisements, deformations, and cruel traps,

They fill your parables and dark predictions—
Your appetite is to create afflictions!

The response of the Prophets once more

‘Warnings of doom are solidly supported
By your own souls,’ the Prophets then retorted.
If you are sleeping somewhere dangerous, where
A snake slides close while you are unaware
Then someone kind alerts you to it, screaming:
‘Jump quickly from that snake—don’t lie there dreaming!’
And you then say, ‘Foretelling doom’s not right.’ 2960
He’ll say, ‘What do you mean? Look in the light!
From such a dark fate I’ll whisk you away
To my own home, where you can safely stay.’
Like Prophets, he informs of what’s concealed;
What’s veiled to others is to him revealed.
‘Don’t eat unripe grapes!’ if a doctor says,
‘For they will harm you in so many ways.’
Would you respond, ‘Why diagnose such pain?’
You’d be abusing someone’s help again.
And if astrologers tell you, ‘Today, 2965
Don’t plan to do that action, come what may!’
Though numerous times his words have proved untrue,
If he’s right once, you’ll do what he tells you.
Our stars don’t have such variability—
They’re always true and yet you fail to see?
Physicians’ and astrologers’ opinions
Give data, while we draw upon true visions.
We see in the far distance smoke and fires
Approaching to burn up all the deniers,
Yet you insist, ‘Be quiet and refrain 2970
From tales of doom—it causes us much strain.’

You who ignore help from the ones who know
Will have bad fates wherever you should go.

A snake slides on your back beyond your view,
And someone on a roof is warning you,
But you say, 'Silence! Don't stress me this way.'
'Stay happy then; my talk's stopped,' he will say.
When the snake bites your neck, and joy you sought
Turns bitter, you will scold him then for naught:
'Is that all you could say? Then why not holler 2975
And with your wailing tear your own shirt-collar?
Or from above throw down a stone at me
To warn of danger coming imminently?'
He'll say, 'Because you said you'd be annoyed.'
You'll snap back, 'Well you've left me overjoyed!'
'Chivalrously I warned you,' he'll remind,
'To help you to escape that awful bind,
But, due to your vile state, you wouldn't see,
And answered with offence and injury.'
This is the nature of base wretches sadly: 2980
You treat them well and they will treat you badly.
Through self-restraint make your vile self surrender;
Kindness is not fit for that cursed offender.
For noble men you should do a good turn—
They'll give you several hundred in return.
Treat a wretch with much wrath and cruelly
And he'll serve as your slave then dutifully.
Infidels torture while they're prosperous, but
In hell they plead, '*Lord, help!*' while desperate.

*The wisdom of the creation of hell in the hereafter and the prison
in this world, so they may be places of worship for the arrogant:
'Come either obediently, or disliking it!'**

The cursed are cleansed when they are met with harshness 2985
And they become cruel when you show them kindness.
In this way, hell's their mosque for worship—where
Are wild birds caught apart from in the snare?
For thieves and villains, gaol's a monastery—
They're mindful there of God continuously.

Worship is mankind's purpose, and so hell's
 The place of worship for one who rebels.
 Man has a hand in all things one could mention,
 But worship is his purpose and intention:
*'I made mankind and jinn for just one thing':** 2990
 No other point but worshipping their King.
 Though a book's purpose is its content, you
 Can use it as a pillow easily too!
 To serve as pillow was not its intention,
 But guidance, theory, gain, and information.
 If you should use a sword just as a nail,
 You're choosing to lose out and not prevail.
 The point of Man is knowledge of the Way,
 But each has his own personal way to pray.
'I've honoured him' is fitting for the noble; 2995
'I've made him weak' is fitting for the woeful.
 Strike villains till they bow down in submission.
 Give to the noble, then watch their fruition.
 God's made a mosque here naturally for both;
 The former's hell, the latter's gain and growth.
 Moses put up Jerusalem's small gate,
 To force vile men to bow down and prostrate,
 For they'd been proud and so imperious;
 Like that gate, hell's a place for neediness:

*Explanation of how God has made the appearance of kings the means of subduing the proud and haughty who refuse to be subdued by God Himself, just as Moses built the Small Gate in the walls of Jerusalem in order for the haughty among the Israelites to bow down on entering, and say: 'Enter the gate, prostrating yourselves, and say "God lighten our burden!"'**

Likewise, the Lord has built a small gate too 3000
 From flesh and bones of kings—heed what is true!
 Worldly men bow to them so happily,
 Though they won't bow down to God's majesty.
 God made a dunghill as their niche to pray—
 It is called 'prince' or 'champion of the day'.

For such a holy presence you're unworthy:
Holy men's canes have sugar; yours are empty.
Groveling before the curs you'll see the base;
For lions, groveling there is a disgrace.
Cats oversee mouse-natured ones; it's clear 3005
Mice don't deserve to fear a lion's near—
Only mere curs of God give them a fright;
How should they feel scared of God's suns' strong light?
'My Lord, Most High!' the prayer of the greats;
'The lord, most low!' however suits ingrates.
For lions of the fray mice feel no fear—
That's for the mystics who are swift as deer.
You should seek one who's slightly less a beggar
And choose him as your lord and benefactor.
Enough! If I explain it all to you, 3010
The prince will rage, because he knows it's true.
The upshot is: 'Treat villains badly, friends,
So they will lay their necks down in the end;
If you should treat the wretched self now kindly,
Like thugs, it shows ingratitude so blindly.
This is why those who suffer are so grateful,
While prosperous men rebel and are deceitful—
With gold-embroidered robes they're proud and rude;
With plain cloaks they've a grateful attitude.
Thanking won't grow from blessings and possessions; 3015
It grows instead from pain and tribulations.

*Story about a Sufi's love for an empty mealcloth**

A Sufi saw a mealcloth on a hook—
He ripped his shirt once he had had a look,
Shouting, 'Behold food of the foodless there!
A cure for pains and famines that is rare.'
When his hot fervour boiled and reached the brim,
Whoever was a Sufi joined with him.
They shrieked and stamped their feet in ecstasy,
Some losing consciousness so drunkenly.

A meddler asked the Sufi, 'Why this mood 3020
 Over a mealcloth which contains no food?'
 He said, 'Begone! You've form, but not the essence.
 You're not a lover—go and seek existence.'
 Love for the lack of food can sate the lovers
 Who aren't bound to existence like the others.
 Lovers have no care for their being at all;
 They profit when they have no capital.
 Without wings they can fly to distant lands,
 And win at polo though they have no hands.
 A dervish who perceived reality 3025
 Wove baskets though he was an amputee.
 Lovers have pitched their tents in Non-existence;
 They're similarly one-coloured with one essence.
 To babies sweetmeat's taste is still unknown,
 Though fairies sense it through its scent alone.
 But how can men perceive through just a scent,
 When from a fairy they're so different?
 From scent that fairy gains a whole lot more
 Than you can gain from a whole sweetmeat store.
 Egyptians viewed the Nile as death and blood, 3030
 But to the Jews the same waves were so good;
 For them the waves became a road that's paved,
 Yet they drowned Pharaoh, who would not be saved.*

*How Jacob was privileged to taste the cup of the Truth from
 Joseph's face and to inhale the scent of the Truth from Joseph's
 scent, and the exclusion of his brothers and the others from both
 these privileges*

In Joseph's face what Jacob then could view
 Was privileged—Joseph's brothers had no clue.
 Through his love, Jacob would have gone to dwell
 Inside the trap they'd dug for him: the well.
 His mealcloth had no food in their poor sight;
 Jacob saw it as full through appetite.
 You can't see houris with your face unwashed; 3035
 The Prophet said, '*No prayer unless you've washed.*'*

Love's food and drink for souls—that's what is meant
When saying hunger is their nourishment.
Jacob hungered for Joseph in that instance,
So his desired food's scent came from the distance.
The man who brought the shirt at rapid pace
Could not perceive of Joseph's scent one trace,
While Jacob, though a hundred miles away,
Could sense the scent of Joseph right away.
So many scholars do not have real learning— 3040
They learn by rote and lack the lover's burning,
But from them others can perceive the scent:
A common listener too learns thus what's meant,
Because with scholars that shirt's just on loan,
Like slave-girls with the dealer—not his own:
They're worthless to him if with him they stay—
He hopes to sell them all on the first day.

The Lord's apportionment sends daily bread;
One's share won't go to someone else instead.
One man's fine thought brought heaven for a day; 3045
An ugly thought then blocked another's way—
God has made heaven from one thought, and He
Made hell's fires from another similarly.
Who knows the way to His rose garden then,
Or to his furnace, which one of our men?
The heart's guard cannot see well from his view
From which nook of the soul the thought first grew—
If it had seen its source, it would have sought
To block the way for each unpleasant thought.
How can its feet reach there when that location 3050
Lies in Non-being, the furthest destination?
Seize the hem of His grace, O my true kings,
The way *the blind take ownership of things*.
His hem is His commands and His decree—
Happy is he who lives obediently.
He lives in meadows with fresh streams that flow,
While one beside him lives with pain and woe,

Wondering, 'Why does that man feel such savour?'

The former asks, 'In whose gaol is my neighbour?

Why are you dry when there are springs around?

3055

Why are you sick still when the cure's been found?

Neighbour, come to this garden now with me.'

He'll answer, 'I can't come, unfortunately.'

*Story about the prince and his slave who loved ritual prayer and
had much intimacy with God through his prayer and invocations*

A prince desired to take a bath one dawn

And shouted, 'Sonqor, wake up now! Come on!

Fetch from Altun the flannel, bowl, and clay,

We'll both go to the public baths today!'

Sonqor fetched all this list of things at once,

Then followed him with full obedience.

There was a mosque on this route and near there

3060

Sonqor heard suddenly the call to prayer.

Since he was keen to do each prayer, he said:

'Great prince who treats slaves like his kin instead,

Would you mind waiting on that bench for me

While I perform the prayers deemed necessary?'

The worshippers and the imam who'd led

The prayers came out once all the prayers were said,

But his slave Sonqor still remained within,

So then the prince, whose patience now grew thin,

Called, 'Sonqor, why have you not stepped outside?'

3065

'This Great One won't let me!' Sonqor replied,

'Wait a bit more, and I'll be out of here.

I heed your words; they're ringing in my ear.'

Seven times they repeated this that day,

Until the prince could not take more delay.

'He won't let me come to you, noble master!'

Was every time Sonqor's repeated answer.

Then the prince shouted back, 'The rest have gone;

Who's holding you there, making you stay on?'

He'd say, 'The same one who's kept you outside

3070

Has at the same time locked me up inside.

That one who won't allow you now to enter
Will not let me depart from this mosque either.
The one who won't allow you to step in
Has shackled this wayfarer's feet within.'

The sea won't let its fish depart from it
And it won't let land creatures enter it.
The fish's source is water and theirs land.
Trickery's pointless as are schemes you've planned—
The lock is strong; God is the only opener, 3075
So strive to be content with full surrender.
If every atom should become a key,
Still only God can open it—trust me.
Once you put all your schemes and tricks aside,
You'll find new fortune from your Sufi guide.
Forget your self, to be remembered. Then,
You'll be the slave who is set free again.

*How the Prophets lost hope of being accepted and approved by the
deniers. God has said, 'Until when the messengers lose hope'**

The Prophets wondered, 'How long shall we give
These people counsel on how they should live?
How long should one beat iron that's still cold, 3080
Or waste one's breath when everything's been told?'
Fate is what makes a creature move and turn;
Teeth sharpen when the stomach starts to burn.
The First Soul brought the Second Soul forth,* and
Fish start to stink from heads down. Understand
And drive your ass as fast as possible—
God said, '*Deliver!*'* It's not optional.
You don't know which one of those two you'll be—
Strive hard till you can see that easily.
When you load cargo on a ship, you do 3085
That with full trust God keeps it safe for you.
You don't know which of those two—you might drown
Or else be saved from ever sinking down.

If you say, 'Till I know which one I'll be,
 I won't get on a ship or in the sea;
 On this trip, I'll be saved or I'll get drowned—
 Reveal in which group I'll at last be found.
 I won't go on this trip with this misgiving
 And slimmest hope like all the others leaving.'
 No trade will be accomplished then by you, 3090
 Because the answer's hidden far from view.
 The frightened merchant with a fragile nature
 Finds neither loss nor profit in his venture.
 Since he's a wretch, he'll suffer a sad plight;
 Only if you eat flames will you find light.
 All things depend on hope—spirituality
 Is the best work, as through it you'll break free.
 You're knocking on this door through hope's directive
 And God knows always what is most constructive.

*Explanation of how the faith of an ordinary believer
is based on fear and hope*

Every trade's motive is the hope for gain 3095
 Even if toil should make you suffer pain.
 Going down to the store to sell each morning
 Is always with the hope to make a living:
 If there's no prospect, then why step outside?
 Who can feel strong with fear they'll be denied?
 How can fear you'll forever be without
 Not make you hesitant to seek it out?
 You say, 'Although I fear I'll be denied,
 That fear gets worse if I've not even tried:
 When I strive hard, my hope feels stronger, while 3100
 In idleness I face a harsher trial.'
 Why then in spiritual work, you doubting twit,
 Does fear of loss prevent you seeking it?
 Have you not seen how in our marketplace
 Prophets and saints gain profit and much grace?

Huge gold-mines opened when they reached this store,
And in this marketplace they've gained much more.
To Abraham the flames became obedient*
And waves bore Noah safely like a servant.*
Iron obeyed, melting in David's hand;*
Wind turned to Solomon's slave at his command.*

3105

*Explanation of the Prophet's saying 'God has
hidden friends'*

Another group are hidden; they're not known
To people who see outer form alone.
Though they possess all, nobody can see
A flash of their majestic sovereignty.
They and their miracles are in this realm;
Even Abdals don't know the names of them.
Do you not know God's bounties sent for you,
Such as when He says, 'Come!' to that realm too.
Every dimension here is from His grace;
There's knowledge of Him every side you face.
When someone generous says, 'Enter the flame!'
Don't say, 'But I'll get burnt.' Go all the same!

3110

*Story about how Anas threw his napkin into an oven,
but it did not burn**

Concerning Anas ben Malek, they say
That he was host to a fine guest one day.
Once they had eaten dinner, he remained,
And Anas saw the napkin had been stained
Yellow and dirty, so he turned and said,
'Come and put it inside the oven, maid!'
Immediately, the wise maidservant threw
It in the oven as he'd told her to.

3115

Astonished guests could not believe their eyes—

They thought it must then burn and smoke would rise.

After a while she took it out again—

It was so clean and white, purged of that stain.

‘Companion of the Prophet,’ they then said,

‘How come it didn’t burn? It’s clean instead.’

‘Because the Prophet after meals would clean

His hands and lips on this cloth that you’ve seen.’

O heart which fire and torment fills with fear, 3120

To such a hand and lips you must draw near.

To an inert thing it gave such great honours—

Imagine what it shows to souls of lovers!

The Prophet made mere bricks the *qebla*,* so

Become like dust near glorious men who know!

They then asked the maidservant, ‘What’s your share,

Your own experience of this strange affair?

Why did you throw it in there at his whim

Even if mysteries are all known by him?

How could you throw a cloth worth such a lot 3125

Into an oven that was flaming hot?’

She said, ‘I have full trust in noble saviours

And I do not despair of their great favours.

What’s a mere napkin? If he should dictate:

“Step in the flames!” I wouldn’t hesitate.

I would jump in with no anxieties;

I have much faith in God’s true devotees.

What’s a napkin? I would myself dive in

When told by knowers whom I put trust in.’

Brother, apply this powerful elixir. 3130

A man’s sincerity should be much stronger

Than such a simple woman’s, otherwise

His heart’s less than a belly in our eyes.

*Story about the Prophet Mohammad coming to the
rescue of a caravan of Arabs, who due to thirst and
drought had been stranded and had resolved to die,
with both the men and the camels' tongues
hanging out*

Once in a valley lived some Bedouins;
A drought had dried up all their water-skins.
Stranded inside the desert, all these men
Seemed like a caravan towards death, when
Mohammad, helper in both worlds, appeared
To give them help as a disaster neared.
He saw there a large caravan on sand 3135
Which was so hot that it was hard to stand;
Their camels left their long tongues hanging out,
And bodies of sick men were strewn about.
Moved, he told them, 'Listen! Some of you
Run to those sandhills that I'm pointing to.
If you see a black man on camel-back
Taking his master water, which you lack,
Bring him and his steed also back to me—
Use force if it should turn out necessary.'
The scouts went to the sandhills without fear, 3140
And soon they saw the following appear:
A black slave on a camel carrying
A water-skin as present for his king.
They said to him, '*The best of humans, who
Is best of creatures too* has summoned you.'
The man said, 'I don't know him. Who's that person?'
They answered, 'He's most fair and the most kind one.'
They praised his qualities as so diverse.
'He sounds like that great poet with fine verse,
Who has subdued a group through sorcery— 3145
I won't approach such people's company.'
They therefore dragged him back against his will,
While he, enraged, would curse and wish them ill.

Once they had reached the Prophet, he decreed:
 'Drink up the water! Share with all in need!'

That one skin sated all the people there;
 Even the camels drank with some to spare,
 And from that he filled other skins up too—
 Clouds swelled with envy at what he could do.

The water from just one skin, when it poured, 3150
 Extinguished flames in hell which wildly roared.
 From just one skin did any person see
 Several skins filled up so easily?
 It was the waves of grace, veiled by the skins,
 Arriving from the Sea of Origins.*
 Water, when boiled, endures evaporation,
 While steam, once cooled down, starts its condensation.
 Rather, without cause or mere cleverness
 God makes the water out of nothingness.

As you've viewed causes since you were created, 3155
 Through ignorance on causes you're fixated
 And, heedless of the Actual Causer, you
 Prefer to have such veils obstruct your view.
 Once causes vanish, you will beat your head
 And cry, '*Our Lord, Our Lord!*' in utter dread.
 'Go to the cause you love!' God will advise,
 'You witness My work now? What a surprise!'
 'From now on I will give you full attention,
 And disregard that cause and its deception.'
 God says, '*If sent back, they'd do that again*'*— 3160
 They're unrepentant, weak, and faithless men,
 But I won't look at that although I know:
 My mercy's full and that's what I'll bestow.
 Your broken pledges also I'll ignore
 To give you gifts now, since you call once more.'
 This act raised in the caravan commotion:
 'What's this, Mohammad? You, who seem an ocean,
 Turned water-skins to veils that can astound;
 You've left both Kurd and Arab fully drowned.'

*How he filled the water-skin of that slave from the Unseen
with water miraculously, and also turned that black slave's
face white, with God's permission*

'Slave, check your water-skin now. It is full, 3165
So you've no reason to complain at all.'

The black slave, stunned by this proof, saw the dawn
Of his faith from beyond, as if reborn:

He saw a fountain gushing through the air,
His flask the veil for grace sent from up there.

He tore apart the veils that hid that vision
To see directly the Unseen's own fountain.

This made the slave's eyes fill with tears, and he
Forgot his home and master totally.

He lost the strength to move ahead at all; 3170
God sent a tremor deep inside his soul.

The Prophet drew him back for his own good,
Saying, 'Wake up! Move on to where you should.

It isn't now the time to be perplexed—
Move quickly on. That state will greet you next.'

He pulled the Prophet's hands then to his face
And kissed them lovingly as filled with grace.

The Prophet rubbed them on his face some more
And this helped him gain fortune from his store:

As a result, the black slave then turned white, 3175
Moonlike, or like the day; his night turned bright,

Handsome as Joseph, charming like him as well—
The Prophet said, 'Go, share what you've to tell.'

Witless and drunk, he went along his route,
Unable even to tell head from foot;

Then, with full water-skins, that transformed man
Approached his master from the caravan.

The master sees his slave, who is now white, and does not recognize him, so he says, 'You've killed my slave. Blood has incriminated you and God has put you in my hands'

The master saw him nearing, grew perplexed,
 Then summoned all to witness what comes next:
 'This is my camel and my water-skin, 3180
 But where's my black slave and what harm's he in?
 A white man now draws near from far away;
 His face is so white, it lights up the day.
 Where is my slave? Is he strange in the head
 Out in the desert? Have wolves left him dead?'
 His slave approached and he asked, 'Who's this man?
 Are you a Yemenite or Turcoman?
 What did you do to my slave? Truthfully
 Tell me if you killed him—no trickery!' 3185
 'If I'd killed him, would I have now come near
 By choice to meet my own death over here?'
 'Where is my slave?' 'I'm standing here! God's grace
 Transformed me, changed to white my old black face.'
 'What are you saying? Where's my slave? Tell me
 The truth, for nothing else can set you free.'
 He said, 'Your secrets with your slave I'll share
 One by one, so you'll see and then be fair:
 Since when you bought me, all that has occurred
 Between us I'll relate till you've concurred, 3190
 So you'll know I'm the same slave actually,
 Though from dark night a dawn rose suddenly.'
 His colour changed, a holy spirit though
 Transcends all forms and colours from below.
 Those fixed on bodies lose us due to that—
 Those who drink water miss out on the vat.
 Those who know souls aren't bound by quantities;
 Immersed in seas they're free from qualities.
 Become all soul! Know soul through soul's own way!
 Be vision's friend, not reasoning's child, today!

When intellect and angel share their source, 3195
 And take two forms as part of wisdom's course,
 The angel having gained wings like a dove,
 While intellect's gained splendour from above—
 They both become supporters of each other,
 Handsome-faced ones, each helping like a brother.
 God gives to both divine intoxication,
 So each helps Man and offers a prostration.
 The self and Satan were originally
 As one, Man's envier and enemy:
 Those who saw Man as body turned away; 3200
 Those who saw trusted light bowed straight away.
 The latter gained from this act clearest vision;
 The former saw just clay, and chose derision.
 This speech is stuck just like an ass on ice.
 Who'd read to Jews the Gospels as advice?
 Can one speak of Omar to Shi'ites then? *
 Or play the lute to satisfy deaf men?
 But if there's someone rare who comprehends,
 This tumult I've raised will suffice him, friends.
 For one fit for the teaching, brick and stone 3205
 Will speak and make the grounded truths well known.

*Explaining that whatever God has bestowed and created
 of the heavens and the earth, and essences and accidents,
 He created it all at the demand of a need. One must make
 oneself in need of something for Him to give it, as He has
 said: 'Is it not He Who answers the distressed one when he
 prays?'* Distress is the proof of worthiness*

It was once Mary's need and pain that led
 Her newborn to stun men with what he said.*
 Part of her spoke independently—
 All one's parts have their speech mysteriously.
 Your hands and feet bear witness at the trial
 Against you—why still use them for denial?

If you're not fit for speech and information,
 The speaker leaves you for a new location.
 Whatever grew did so through need, my friend, 3210
 As seekers find what they seek in the end.
 And God has made the heavens, simply so
 He can remove all need felt down below.
 Whenever there's a pain, the remedy
 Comes there; provisions come to poverty.
 To where there is a problem comes the answer;
 To where the boat is docked flows gushing water.
 Acquire thirst and stop searching here and there
 For water—it will then gush everywhere.
 The tender-throated baby is born first, 3215
 Then milk flows from the breast to quench its thirst.
 Go, race through highs and lows, so you can meet
 Deep thirst and be a victim of the heat—
 Then, through the bee's sound in the air near you,
 You'll savour sounds of flowing streams here too.
 Your need's not less than that of plants—you take
 Some water also for your own soul's sake:
 You take it with your ear and draw mere drops
 To give relief to all the dried-up crops:
 Kawsar's water fills clouds of kindnesses* 3220
 For the soul's crops and hidden essences,
 So that '*Their Lord gave them to drink*'* is read—
 Be thirsty. 'God knows best what's right,' they've said.

*That infidel woman comes with her baby near Mustafa,
 and it speaks like Jesus about the miracles of the Prophet*

From that same village then an infidel
 Came near to test the Prophet once as well.
 Wearing a veil, she neared him and kept hold
 Of her own baby, who was two months old.
 The baby spoke, '*God grant His peace to you.*
We've come to you, God's Prophet, since you're true.'

'Shut up!' its mother shouted angrily. 3225
 'Who put into your ears that testimony?
Who taught you this, small child who's still so young,
 Making so talkative your infant tongue?'
It answered, 'God taught me, then Gabriel:
 He utters this and I join in as well.'
She asked, 'Where is He?' 'There above your head.
 Can't you now see? Look up!' her baby said.
Gabriel now hovers over you, and he
 Serves as a guide in numerous ways for me.
'Can you see him?' 'Of course, he's over you 3230
 And radiant as the full moon in my view.
He's teaching me the Prophet's qualities,
 And through this raising me from depths like these.'
The Prophet asked it, 'Baby, now tell me
 What your name is—speak up obediently!'
'My name's "Abd al-Aziz" in God's own realm,
 But "Abd al-Ozza" with vile men like them.*
I am clean rid of "Ozza" now for good
 Through God, who gave to you your Prophethood.'
That two-month-old, bright as the full moon, said 3235
 Mature truths like those from the circle's head.*
A scent that moment wafted down from heaven;
 Mother and child both breathed that fresh scent in then,
And said, 'It is much better than to fall
 To lay before this fragrance one's own soul.'
To one whom God grants true intelligence
 Plants and inanimates give evidence;
He whom God gives protection will soon see
 Birds and fish guard his own security.

*How an eagle seized the Prophet's boot and flew away
with it until a black snake fell out of it*

And then the Prophet heard the call to prayer 3240
 As they talked; it resounded in the air.

He sought some water for ablutions and,
 Though cold, he washed his face and then each hand.
 After he'd washed his feet, he saw his boot
 Get snatched away as if it was some loot.
 He reached for his boot in the usual way,
 But from his hand a bird snatched it away;
 Just like the wind that eagle then flew out
 Of reach, and emptied it—a snake fell out.
 When that boot was upturned, a big snake fell, 3245
 Making that eagle blessed since it meant well.
 The eagle then returned with it back there,
 Saying, 'Come, take it. Then perform your prayer.
 Out of necessity I dared to do
 This act, though I feel powerless next to you.
 Woe to those who would trespass brazenly
 Through their desire and not necessity!'

The Prophet thanked the bird and then he said:
 'What we thought cruelty was support instead.
 I felt annoyed when you snatched like a thief; 3250
 Though you took pain away, I then felt grief.
 Though every unseen thing's been clarified
 For me, my heart was then preoccupied.'
 The bird said, 'Negligence be far from you!
 From your reflection it came to my view;
 If I see snakes in your boots from the air
 It's your reflection which casts it up there.'
 The Friend of God's reflection's a bright flash;
 The dark-souled one's worse than a pile of ash.
 God's slave's reflection's luminous, you'll find, 3255
 While the outsider's makes one wholly blind.
 Discern each one's reflection, soul, then sit
 Next to the sort you find appropriate.

*The way to learn a lesson from this story and knowing for sure
 that 'with hardship there's ease'**

A lesson's in this tale, soul; its intent
 Is that with God's decree you be content,

So you'll be clever, and think positively
Even when you face bad things suddenly.
Others turn pale with fear, but you will smile
Like roses at both gain and loss's trial.
People tear petals off fine roses, yet 3260
Roses don't cease to smile nor feel upset—
Each says, 'Why let a thorn make me forlorn?
I have produced a smile due to that thorn.'
If you lose something due to fate's decree,
It will redeem you from calamity.
What's Sufism? To find such happiness
Inside your heart when you should feel distress.
View His chastisement like that bird, the taker
Of that old boot from one with the best nature,
All so his foot would not endure a bite— 3265
The intellect that's cleared of dust gains light.
God said, '*Don't grieve for what you cannot keep,**
What you lose when the wolf devours your sheep,'
For that loss staves off a much greater sorrow,
And this loss blocks a bigger loss tomorrow.

*A man asks Moses to teach him the language of
animals and birds*

A young man once asked Moses, 'Will you teach
Me languages the beasts use for their speech,
So from their howls and their hullabaloo
I can learn lessons for my own faith too?
Since the whole point of all Man's languages 3270
Is to gain water, bread, and cleverness,
Animals may see in a different way
The pain of time and how life fades away.'
'Begone, abandon this wish,' Moses said,
'For it holds danger all round up ahead.
Seek lessons and awareness from the Lord,
Not from the speech or writings some men hoard.'

All things in this world glorify the Lord,
But for compulsory praise there's no reward.
Put a sword in his hand; change this weak man
Into a warrior or a highwayman.'
Since Man's *been honoured** with free will to make
Decisions, he's half honey-bee, half snake:
Believers all store honey in their hives;
Infidels poison, snake-like, taking lives—
Believers ate choice herbs, so their saliva 3295
Served bee-like for the dead as a reviver,
But infidels drank boiling water, so
The poison in them soon began to show.
The Fount of Life is men with revelation;
Life's poison is those prone to lust's sensation.
In this world all praise and congratulation
Is for free will and vigilant preservation.
While they're in gaol, all rogues transform their ways,
Becoming pious, busy with God's praise.
When will-power's gone, actions aren't valuable— 3300
Beware lest time should seize your capital!
Will-power's your source of profit, so beware!
Preserve your will-power's course of time with care.
Man rides the horse of '*We have honoured**' and
Free will's reins are in his perception's hand.
Moses then kindly gave that man advice:
'Your wish will make your face turn pale—think twice!
Be fearful of God and renounce this passion.
The Devil has been teaching you deception.'

*The seeker becomes content with being taught the language of
domestic birds and dogs, and Moses complies with his request*

The seeker then asked, 'Maybe just dogs' words 3305
And what is spoken by domestic birds?'
Moses said, 'You know best. You'll have those two.
Both of those languages now come to you.'
In order then to test them out, at dawn
He waited by his own gate and looked on.

One of his servants shook his mealcloth clean;
 A piece of bread from this fell from between.
 A cock snatched it like catching in a game.
 A dog said, 'That's not fair! We're not the same:
 You can eat wheat grains, but I cannot eat
 Such food, and this bread is my only treat;
 You can eat wheat and other kinds of seed,
 Jubilant one! This bread's what I now need.
 From dogs would you now snatch without a care
 This little crust of bread that is their share?'

3310

The cock's reply to the dog

'Be quiet and don't grieve!' the cock replied,
 'Something else soon will come—God will provide:
 The master's horse is now about to die—
 Tomorrow eat your fill and don't you cry.
 The horse's death means feasts for every dog—
 A day of plenty with no long, hard slog.'
 On overhearing this he sold his horse;
 The cock was left embarrassed in due course.
 The cock snatched bread again on the next day;
 The dog complained it acted the same way:
 'O scheming cock, how many lies must we
 Endure—you're cruel and you lack honesty.
 Where is the horse you claimed would die for sure?
 You lack truth like a blind astrologer.'
 That knowing cock then turned to it and said:
 'The horse did die, but somewhere else instead.
 He sold it to avoid loss with great stealth;
 The buyers then lost much of their own wealth.
 Tomorrow his old mule will die at least
 And that means for the dogs a massive feast.'
 The greedy man sold it that very day,
 Avoiding loss's misery this way.
 On the third day, the dog barked at the cock:
 'With drums the liars' prince just loves to mock!'

3315

3320

It said, 'He sold his mule all of a sudden. 3325
His slave tomorrow will be fatally stricken,
And when he dies his family will scatter
Bread to each dog and every single beggar.'
He sold that slave too to unwitting men;
His face lit up, for dodging loss again.
He gave thanks and he marvelled jubilantly:
'Three times already this has rescued me!
Since learning how the dog and cock speak, I
Have stitched up fully *evil destiny's eye!*
The disappointed dog said the next day: 3330
'Where's all the food, cock? Drivel's all you say . . .

*The cock is ashamed before the dog because of the falseness
of those three promises*

' . . . How long will you continue with your lies?
From your nest there is nothing else that flies.'
'Far be it from me and my kind that we
Cocks should be lying pathologically.
As truthful as muezzins are all cocks;
We watch the sun and keep the time like clocks.
Inwardly, we stay watchmen of the sun,
Though on our heads a basin you upturn.'
(God's Friends are its real watchmen in mankind, 3335
Sensing the secrets to which most are blind.)
It said, 'God gave us to humanity
For the azan* and prayer originally.
About the prayer's time if we're once mistaken,
This will be cause for our lives to be taken:
Saying at the wrong time, "*Come to the good!*"*
Will make it lawful then to shed our blood.'
(The one who's sinless and infallible
Is the inspired cock, who is spiritual.)
In the home of his buyer that slave died, 3340
Which meant his buyer's losses multiplied,
This man saved his own wealth, but this would lead
To loss of his whole life—what use is greed?

One loss could have prevented what's more costly—
 Ransom your soul with wealth and with your body.
 When kings sit to make judgments you would give
 Your wealth to flee death and be left to live—
 Why now with fate are you so miserly,
 Withholding wealth from the True Judge? Tell me!

The cock foretells the death of the master of the house

The cock said, 'He will die for sure tomorrow. 3345
 His heir will slaughter then a cow in sorrow.
 The owner will die finally on this day;
 Tomorrow much rich food will come your way.
 Both high and low will taste some bread and meat
 And other leftovers out in the street.
 They'll share the sacrificed cow and fine breads,
 Scattering it over dogs' and beggars' heads.'
 The horse, the mule, and slave died, and they led
 To the doom of this man who was misled.
 He had dodged loss of wealth and all its pain, 3350
 But his own death was all that he could gain.
 Why then the Sufis' bodily austerities?
 The soul's made permanent by trials like these.
 Unless he has gained permanence this way,
 How could he make his body waste away?
 How can he toil for altruism's sake
 Unless he sees there's a reward at stake?
 The one who gives without thought of reward
 Is God alone, the Needless, Holy Lord,
 Or God's Friend, who has taken on His ways, 3355
 Becoming luminous through eternal rays,
 For he's rich while all others feel a lack—
 Paupers can't give and not want something back.
 Unless a child sees that an apple's here,
 He won't swap his vile onion out of fear;
 And all the market traders, for that matter,
 Sit at their stalls just for the chance to barter:

They offer numerous fine wares, while within
 They simply long for trading to begin.
 You won't hear one '*Salaam!*', O pious fellow, 3360
 Which won't require from you some words to follow:
 I've never heard '*Salaam!*' come from another
 Without desire to hear '*Salaam, my brother!*'
 Apart from God's '*Salaam!*'—seek that rare treat
 House to house, place to place, and street to street.
 From men with special scent too I've perceived
 The Lord's '*Salaam!*' which gratefully I've received—
 Aiming for that, I savour in my heart
 Others' salaams like they're life's sweetest part.
 That saint's is God's '*Salaam!*' the ultimate aim, 3365
 For he has set the vile self's house aflame:
 Dead to his self, he now lives through the Lord;
 God's secrets now are in his every word.
 New life is gained from bodily death and suffering,
 Because it makes the spirit everlasting.
 The wretch pricked up his ears each time they'd talk
 To harken to the words said by the cock.

*How that person ran to Moses for refuge when he heard news
 from the cock about his own death*

Once he heard these things, he began to run
 To Moses' door—God spoke to that one.*
 He rubbed his face with dust, so filled with dread: 3370
 'Moses, Kalim,* save me from this!' he said.
 Moses said, 'Sell yourself to dodge this pit,
 Since you are so proficient now at it.
 You made these buyers suffer losses and
 At their expense watched your purse then expand.
 I saw already in a brick this fate
 That you saw in a looking-glass too late.'
 (The wise foresee the outcome from the start;
 It's seen too late by those who lack their heart.)
 He kept on weeping. 'Good, kind man,' he said, 3375
 'Don't rub it in and beat me on the head!

I got involved in what was far beyond me—

Give me a good reward, though I'm unworthy.'

Moses said, 'Son, an arrow in the air

Fired from a bow will not return back there.

But I'll ask God for mercy, so you can

Leave with your faith intact, you desperate man.'

(When you take your faith with you, you're still living:

When you die with your faith, you're everlasting.)

The man's health suffered then most suddenly;

3380

They brought a basin close immediately.

That is death's burning, not mere indigestion.

What use is vomiting, you raw unblest one?

Four people carried him home to recover

And he would rub his legs against each other.

If you leave Moses' advice ignored,

You'll dash yourself against a sharp steel sword

Which will not hesitate to take your life—

It's your own doing; you've caused your own strife.

*Moses prays for that person that he might leave the world
with his faith intact*

The following dawn, Moses started to pray:

3385

'O God, don't take this sick man faith's away.

Forgive him blunders like the King you are;

He has been stupid and has gone too far.

I'd said, "You do not have the readiness—

He did not heed my words with seriousness."

The one who can lay hands on snakes is he

Whose hand transforms rods to them magically;*

To learn the Unseen's secrets one is fit

Only if one can seal one's lips with it.

Just waterfowl are fit to join the sea.

3390

Heed this! *God knows best what's right!* Doesn't he?

A different kind of bird dived unafraid

And drowned—Loving One, take his hand. Give aid!

God answers Moses' prayer

God said, 'I grant faith to him, and, if you
Should like, this moment I'll revive him too.
I would bring back to life like a rebirth
All of the corpses buried in the earth.'
'This is the world of dying,' Moses said,
'Revive them in that radiant world instead.
Unlike that world of Being, this one decays; 3395
Return of transients is not work that pays.
Scatter blessings now on them in the realm
Of "*Present in Our Presence*".* That suits them.'
This was to teach that worldly loss gives you
Gain for your soul, and frees it from blight too.
Austerities are what you need to purchase;
You'll save your soul through this hard bodily service.
And if, without you choosing, it arrives,
Bow down, and give thanks—be a man who thrives!
Give thanks He's given you austerity; 3400
You didn't do it—He did with His '*Be!*'*

*Story about that woman whose children never survived.
She lamented and God replied, 'That is in place of your
ascetic discipline and is for you in place of the jihad of
the strugglers in God's way'*

A woman would each year bear a new son,
But none survived up to six months, not one.
After just three or four, each one would die
And then in grief 'O God, alas!' she'd cry.
'I bore him for nine months; he lived for three—
My blessings pass like rainbows, rapidly.'
Before the men of God she would complain
In this way through a knowledge-bearing pain.

Twenty children went to their graves this way— 3405
 Each struck by flames that quickly burn away.
 A paradise appeared to her one night,
 Verdant, eternal, lovely to her sight.
 I call grace that's beyond words 'garden', though
 It's more the essence of such things below.
 For *what no one's seen* 'garden' isn't right,
 But God used 'lamp' once for the Unseen's light.*
 Analogy and not comparison,
 It gave a clue to that bewildered one.
 In brief, she saw, then felt intoxication, 3410
 Too weak before that great manifestation.
 She saw her own name on a palace wall
 And reckoned that it was hers after all.
 Then she was told, 'To that one God sent bounty
 Who pledges her own soul to Him sincerely.
 One must complete much service for the sake
 Of this rare meal, if wishing to partake.
 In taking refuge you were lazy, so
 Instead God gave you grief and brought you woe.'
 'O Lord, for a whole century or more 3415
 Give me these—shed my blood!' she'd then implore.
 On entering the garden, she could see
 All of her children there alive and free.
 'I lost them, but, Lord, they weren't lost to You.
 None's perfect with the Unseen lost from view.'
 If you don't bleed yourself, then from your nose
 Blood flows out, lest the fever's danger grows.
 A fruit's core's better than the skin; what's more
 Body's skin while the Loved One is the core.
 In fact, Man has a core that is exquisite— 3420
 If you're inclined to for one moment, seek it!

How Hamza entered the battle without armour

Towards the end, when Hamza joined the fray,
 He'd fight without his armour, come what may.

His chest and torso bare, he'd head towards
 The foe's ranks, hurl himself then at their swords.
 People asked, 'Uncle of the Prophet, lion
 Who breaks ranks and is known as "Monarch stallion",
 Have you not heard your God's revealed instruction:
 "*Don't throw yourselves towards you own destruction*"?*'

Why are you doing this, though that's revealed, 3425
 In such a manner on the battlefield?
 When you were young, solidly built, and muscular,
 You wouldn't line up while not wearing armour—
 Now you are hunchbacked, old, and frail, why now
 Behave as if you're reckless anyhow?
 Recklessly you are grappling fierce foes here,
 Struggling against the sabre and the spear.
 The sword has no respect for age—how can
 Arrows and swords discern an ageing man?'

Unaware sympathizers in this guise 3430
 Protectively gave counsel which seemed wise.

Hamza's reply to the people

'When I was still young,' Hamza then replied,
 'I thought that leaving this world was to die.
 How should one happily go to death, walk bare
 To a snake's pit or to a dragon's lair?
 But I now, through Mohammad's light and grace,
 Am not a captive of this transient place.
 The King's own army camp is in my sight
 Beyond the senses—it's filled with God's light,
 Tent after tent, and with each rope and stake— 3435
 Thanks be to that man who shook me awake!'

For those whose eyes see death as mere destruction
 '*Don't throw yourself in harm's way!*'* is instruction,
 But he who sees death as an open door
 Receives the call '*Race here!*'* and longs to soar.
 Those who see only death had better fear!
*Those seeing Resurrection—race up here!**

Welcome, you who see grace. Rejoice, you're blest!

Woe to those who see wrath. *Become distressed!*

For Joseph all would sacrifice their head, 3440

The wolf makes all leave guidance, though, instead.*

Everyone's death will match him in the end—

To foes it is a foe, to friends a friend.

To Turcomans the mirror is so fair,

To Africans it's dark—they don't compare.

As you flee death, the thing you really fear

Is in your self. Heed well what you now hear!

It's your vile face, not death's face, which you flee;

Death is a leaf, but your soul is its tree

Whether it's good or bad, from you it grew; 3445

Pleasant or ugly, each thought is from you.

If you're pricked by a thorn, who grew that one?

If wearing silk, by whom was that silk spun?

Actions and their rewards aren't of a kind;

Service is not like the bestowal assigned:

Rewards and deeds do not bear a resemblance,

The latter accident, the former essence.

The latter's struggle, sweat, and servitude,

The former silver, gold, and trays of food.

If you're accused or come under suspicion, 3450

It's due to your own victim's prayer's petition.

You claim, 'I am immune from that concern,

For I am not accusing anyone.'

Your sin is of a different kind—take heed!

How should the fruit resemble your sown seed?

One fornicated and the rod was used:

Now he protests, 'With rods who've I abused?

Wasn't this for the fornication then?

How does a stick match it? Tell me again.'

Moses, how can a rod seem like a snake? 3455

Physician, how is that cure like the ache?

Instead of swinging rods, if you spurt semen

It could grow into a most decent human:

Your semen turns into a friend or snake,

So why is that rod's change so hard to take?

Do semen and the child look similar?

Do sugar cubes look like the canes of sugar?

When one sows here a bow or a prostration,

It forms in yonder world a heavenly garden;

When praise of God comes from one's mouth, each word 3460

*The Lord of Dawn** turns to a heavenly bird.

Your praises with the Lord you can't compare

Although bird semen is a kind of air.*

When your hands give out to the others alms,

They raise up in the next world fine date palms.

Your patience forms the water stream in heaven;

The milk stream comes from your love and affection;

The honey stream comes through your worship's savour;

The wine stream through your drunkenness's stupor.*

Such causes don't match their effects, do they? 3465

Nobody knows why God fixed it this way.

Once all these causes follow your command,

The four streams too will do what you demand.

You make them flow wherever you should please;

They all depend on your prior qualities,

Just like your semen, all controlled by you—

Your offspring follow your direction too:

Your son, while running where you have dictated,

Will say, 'I'm from what you ejaculated.'

As things in this world follow your direction, 3470

Those streams beyond too follow your instruction.

Your orders are obeyed too by the trees

Because they bear fruit through your qualities.

Such qualities here are controlled by you,

So your reward's in your command there too.

And when your hand deals out to victims blows,

In hell a Zaqqum tree then quickly grows.*

In anger when you set men's hearts aflame,

You are the source of hell's fires—you're to blame.

Since here your fire burns people, there again 3475

What's born from it will kindle fires for men.

Other men are the targets of your flame;

The fire produced like this sets them aflame.

Scorpion- and snake-like speeches that you make
 Bite you in hell as scorpion and as snake.
 You kept the Friends of God here waiting once,
 So you must wait there for deliverance—
 ‘Tomorrow or the next day,’ you once said:
 You’ll wait for God to summon you with dread:
 You’ll stay there waiting underneath the sun, 3480
 Which melts souls, to face up to what you’ve done,
 Since you’d kept heaven waiting and you’d sowed
 Seeds of ‘Tomorrow I’ll take that good road.’
 Your anger is hell-fire’s original seed—
 Extinguish it! It is a trap! Take heed!
 Only the Light puts out this fire, no doubt:
 ‘*We’re grateful that your light put our fire out.*’*
 If you lack light, show clemency to men;
 Your flame’s alive still and might grow again.
 Beware too of pretence and rote! Just light 3485
 Of faith extinguishes flames of that height.
 Don’t feel safe till true faith’s light seems quite clear,
 For later hidden fires might yet appear.
 Deem the light water; hold with all your might.
 When you have water, fire can’t give a fright.
 It puts fire out, since fire habitually
 Burns up all of the water’s progeny.
 Spend time with waterfowl who’ll lead you to
 Water of Life, so you can drink there to.

Land birds and waterfowl look very similar; 3490
 Like oil and water, they will fight each other;
 They’re opposites, each faithful to its source—
 Since they look similar, take care on this course!
 Satanic whispering and God’s inspiration
 Are different though they’re both communication;
 Both brokers in the market of the conscience,
 They advertise their merchandise, esteemed prince.
 If you weigh up thoughts like a money-dealer
 Who serves the heart, discern like a slave-dealer

Between the two types; if you can't, then say

3495

'*No to being swindled!*' and don't rush that way.

How to avoid being swindled in trade

A man said to the Prophet after meeting:

'In trade I'm always victim of men's cheating.

All traders try dishonest trickery—

Like sorcerers, they all bamboozle me.'

'When you are scared', the Prophet then replied,

'Of being duped, take three days to decide.

Diligence is God's gift for feeling certain,

While haste comes from the scheming and cursed Satan.'

If to a dog you throw a piece of bread,

3500

It sniffs it first then eats, if it's well bred.

It uses its nose—you, wise man, should too:

You can smell with the intellect in you.

The earth and heavens were made in creation

By God in six days, with deliberation;

He could have simply used his order '*Be!*'*

To raise a hundred of them instantly.

Little by little till a man is forty

Our King makes him complete his lifetime gradually.

Although he's able in a single instant

3505

To send forth fifty who were non-existent.

Jesus was able with one prayer he said

Without a long delay to raise the dead.

Can Jesus' creator not raise then

Without delay successive groups of men?

Taking His time is simply for the sake

Of guiding you to act thus, with no break:

A little stream that flows continually

Will not turn murky with impurity.

Deliberation's similar to eggs too

3510

From which birds of good fortune hatch for you.

Why should the bird and egg look just the same,

Even if from that egg this bird first came?

Wait till your limbs hatch birds on the Last Day
 Just as eggs do, exactly the same way.
 Although the sparrow's egg looks like the snake's,
 They're worlds apart—avoid such big mistakes!
 The quince's doesn't match the apple's seed
 Though they look so alike—discern, take heed!
 We see as similar leaves on different trees,
 But their fruit are diverse varieties.
 Our bodies are like leaves, as in appearance
 They are alike, but each soul has a difference.
 People at the bazaar appear so similar
 But one feels joy while grief consumes another.
 Even in death we leave here the same way:
 Half of us lose, half of us rule the day.

3515

The death of Belal while he was rejoicing

Like the new moon, Belal grew thin and frail;
 His African face even looked death-pale.
 His wife saw him and cried, '*Oh what distress!*'
 Belal said, '*No, no, it is happiness!*'
 I've been in grief from living until now.
 What do you know of death's joys anyhow?'
 While he was saying this, his face then grew
 Narcissi, roses, and red tulips too:
 The glow of his face and his shining eyes
 Were evidence that his words weren't lies.
 He was black in black-hearted people's view;
 The pupil of men's eyes is pitch black too.
 Blind people are in fact those black in colour,
 While seeing people are the moon's own mirror.
 Who sees the pupil of your inner sight
 Other than men with extraordinary light?
 Since none see it except the visionary few,
 Who else has such perceptive vision? Who?
 All but such men must stick to imitation—
 They can't compete with men of direct vision.

3520

3525

'The parting, husband of good constitution!'

His wife said. 'No, dear wife, this is the union.'

'Tonight you are a stranger,' she then sighed, 3530

'You'll leave your home and family once you've died.'

'No, no, tonight my soul departs', he said,

'From exile back to its true home instead.'

She asked, 'Where shall we see your face again?'

'Among God's circle of most special men.'

His special circle is now joined with you—

From downwards to above adjust your view!

Light in that circle is now shimmering

From God just like a bezel in a ring.

She cried, 'This home has been destroyed, my love!' 3535

'No, watch the moon, and not the clouds above.

It's wrecked to rebuild bigger than before

Since now my people number many more.'

The wisdom in the destruction of the body at death

Like Adam, I was trapped in misery.

Now East and West contain my progeny.

I was a beggar in a wretched pit—

I'm now a king for whom a castle's fit.

Castles are where the kings relax; the tomb

Gives only to a corpse sufficient room.

For Prophets, this world is too narrow, so 3540

They've soared beyond all space like kings we know,

While to the dead this world seems wonderful;

Though it looks big, it really is too small.

If it's not narrow, why the groan and frown?

Why are those who've lived long the most bent down?

At sleeping time, when it is liberated

From this place, feel your soul become elated;

The wicked one can leave bad ways behind

And prisoners will no longer feel confined.

This earth and sky, which look so vast and deep, 3545

Become extremely narrow when you sleep.

This world's a blindfold that steals sense of space;
 Its smile is weeping and its pride disgrace.

*A comparison involving this world, which is wide in appearance
 and narrow in reality, and a comparison involving sleep, which
 is release from this narrowness*

Like steam-baths, where, due to the heat, you felt
 Uncomfortable, as if about to melt.
 Although the steam-baths might be broad and long,
 You don't feel well there, as the heat's too strong.
 Your heart won't feel good till you exit it,
 So that room's space gives you no benefit;
 Like wearing tight shoes in the desert when 3550
 You wander there, misguided wretch, for then
 The desert's vastness will feel so restrictive
 Just like a prison when you are a captive—
 Whoever sees you from afar might say:
 'He's in the desert like a flower today,'
 Not knowing you seem flower-like outwardly
 But groan like wicked people inwardly.
 Sleep is like kicking off your shoes—your soul
 Breaks free in sleep from body's tight control.
 Sleep is a kingdom to God's Friends, and so 3555
 They're like the Seven Sleepers long ago.
 Without sleep they can dream, and they can soar
 To Non-existence and not need a door.

'A narrow house that cramps the soul He's wrecked,'
 Belal said. 'Now huge castles He'll erect.
 Stuck in a womb just like an embryo,
 I've reached nine months and now it's time to go.
 Unless my mother now feels childbirth's pain,
 Amid the flames in this gaol I'll remain.
 Death's pain compels my nature's mother to 3560
 Give way, so that the lamb can leave the ewe,

Then graze on lush, green pastures, so take heed!
Open the womb wide—this lamb's huge indeed.'
In childbirth every mother suffers aches;
The baby pushes till the gaol's lock breaks.
The mother weeps, '*Where is the refuge? Near?*'
The baby laughs, 'Deliverance is here!'
Under the sky all mothers possible,
Mineral, animal, or vegetable,
None of them know the other ones' affliction 3565
Except those mystics who have reached perfection.
A modest man sees more of men's affairs
Than they themselves do with long beards and airs—
The things the man of heart knows of your state,
My brother, you yourself can't estimate.

*Explanation of how heedlessness, grief, laziness,
and darkness all originate from the body, which
is of the earth and lower world*

Heedlessness comes from bodies; spirits see
All of the mysteries with full certainty.
When earth leaves the celestial atmosphere,
Then night and day completely disappear:
The earth brings darkness and blocks out the light; 3570
The heavens and the moon don't bring the night.
Smoke rises from the firewood through the air,
Not from the flaming stars up over there.
Mere fancies lead to error; intellect
That's true leads always to what is correct.
All heaviness and laziness's source
Is body; souls can even fly of course.
A rush of blood makes your face blush red, while
A face turns yellow due to too much bile;
Phlegm is the reason why a face turns white; 3575
Black bile will make it turn as dark as night.
He is the Maker of effects, that's true,
But look beyond, don't take the simple view!

The kernels cannot choose while trapped in shells,
 Still under doctors' and diseases' spells.
 When someone's born a second time, he'll tread
 Upon all causes, stepping on their head;
 This Man's faith isn't for the first cause, friend,
 Nor do particulars hate him or offend.
 In the horizon, like the sun, he'll sail; 3580
 Sincerity's his bride, while form's the veil.
 Beyond horizons and beyond the heavens
 Like intellects and souls, beyond locations.
 Our intellects are shadows of That One:
 They trail His feet like shadows in the sun.
 When jurists know of a revealed law, then
 They won't apply analogy for men,
 But if there's no revealed law, then you'll see
 Them have to count on an analogy.

Comparison of a revealed text with analogy

The Holy Spirit's words of revelation 3585
 Surpass analogy by means of reason.
 Spirit enables intellect to see—
 It can't be under its authority!
 Rather it shapes the lower intellect
 And that controls things due to its effect.
 If, as with Noah, spirit aided you,
 Where is the sea and ark? Where's the flood too?
 Intellect reckons an effect's the spirit,
 The sun's light and its orb, though, are quite separate.
 A wayfarer's content with bread—one bite 3590
 Might send him near the sun's orb through its light.
 This light which we can see here as a ray
 Does not endure when night succeeds the day—
 The ones who're at the sun's orb permanently
 Are deluged in the light perpetually;
 Sunsets and clouds do not disturb their station,
 As they've been freed from painful separation.

And from the heavens they originated,
Or, if from earth, they must have transmuted,
Because terrestrials can't bear that light's rays 3595
To shine directly down on them always:
For if the sun shines on your soil non-stop,
It burns it, and you cannot grow your crop.
Fish must remain in water, not a snake—
How can it join the fish inside a lake?
But there are skilful snakes up in the mountain
Who act the way that fish act in an ocean;
Their trickery makes men crazy and brings awe,
Their fear of water though remains a flaw.
And there are skilful fish in this sea, who 3600
Transform snakes into fish through magic too.
The fish deep in the Sea of Majesty*
Have been taught lawful magic by that sea.
And, through their radiance, the impossible
Is managed, bad luck turns to good as well.
If till the end of time I talk this way,
Many times over there'd be more to say.

*The proper etiquette of listeners and disciples at the
emanation of wisdom from the tongue of the master*

To weary people this is repetition;
To me it is the cause of Resurrection.
The candle flares up if we should repeat 3605
Lighting it; earth forms gold through constant heat.
Among seekers, if there's one weary soul,
The messenger won't pass on news at all;
Clairvoyant messengers would like an audience
With Esrafil's zealous manner and obedience.
They have a monarch's pride and attitude;
From this world's men they seek some servitude.
Unless you should observe their stated rules,
Do not expect to gain from them, you fools.

How should they now pass on to you the trust, 3610
 If you won't bow down in submission first?
 How should they deem nice any old behaviour
 When they've come from high castles as your saviour?
 They are not beggars to feel now obliged
 For service from you who have schemed and lied.
 Though you lack spirit and are not yet bold,
 Spend gold for such a king. Do not withhold.
 Messenger, please ignore each weary one,
 And let your marvellous horse still gallop on.
 Happy the Turcoman who shuns debating, 3615
 Whose horse leaps into flames, not hesitating;
 This makes the horse so hot that it will try
 To race up to the summit of the sky.
 The one who keeps this world far from his eye
 Can burn, like fire, wet things as well as dry.
 And if repentance finds fault and gives blame,
 Fire first will set repentance all aflame.
 Repentance can't spring up from nothingness
 To face the mystic's ardent powerfulness.

*How every animal knows the smell of its enemy and
 takes precaution, and the folly and baseness of that
 person who is the enemy of that person against whom
 one cannot take precaution, nor flee from, nor resist*

Although they're beasts, most horses know the smell 3620
 Of a fierce lion, and its roar as well.
 Indeed, each animal can tell its foe
 By a clear sign or mark that they all know.
 By day the little bat won't flap about—
 Like thieves, at night it flies to seek food out.
 The bat is the most base and wretched one,
 Because it is the foe of the bright sun;
 It cannot bear the wounds earned in their fray,
 Nor, through its curses, ever drive away

The sun, which looks away from all of that
 Rage and anxiety of a mere bat. 3625

That sun's the height of kindness and perfection;
 That bat's defenceless, lacking real protection.

If you should pick a foe, pick one your size
 So you can capture it, if you are wise.

If a drop picks a fight now with the sea,
 It will just show itself up stupidly.

Its cleverness can't pass beyond its nose—
 How then can that one reach where no one goes?

Here's the rebuke for the sun's enemy: 3630

You're foes with its source too, though you can't see.

Foe of That Other Sun whose glories make
 Each single star in our sky start to shake,

You're not His foe, but your own foe! Why should
 The fire care that you've turned to burning wood?

Should it feel loss because it's burning you?
 And sorrow for the pain it's causing too?

His mercy's not like human mercy, where
 Sorrow is mixed in—it's beyond compare.

The mercy shown by men comes from their stress; 3635

God's mercy's free of sorrow and distress.

Know that God's mercy, which you have received,
 Differs—just its effect can be conceived.

The difference between knowing something by comparison and blind acceptance and knowing the essential nature of that thing

The fruit and influence of His mercy's clear,
 But who knows its essential nature here?
 None knows the actual nature of perfection
 Except through its effects and by comparison:
 A child can't know what sex is like you do,
 Even if he says, 'It's like sweets to you.'
 How can delight in sex be really similar
 To what you feel while eating sweets and sugar?

3640

A clever man compared them once through pleasure
 They both give, since you're childlike by his measure.
 Thus, through comparison a child might know—
 It can't sense it's essential nature though.
 You say, 'I know'—that's not inaccurate,
 But 'I don't know' is just as accurate:
 When someone asks, 'Do you know Noah, who
 Is God's own Messenger and pure light too?'
 If you say, 'How should I not know that one 3645
 When he's more famous than the moon and sun,
 When children say his name in recitations
 Like leaders of the prayer for congregations,
 All using the Qur'an as source, to tell
 His legends from past glorious days so well.'
 That would be right as far as his description,
 Even though his essential nature's hidden.
 'How can I know him?' if instead you ask,
 'Only one like him can fulfil that task:
 I'm a lame ant, how can I know for real 3650
 Elephants' natures or pure Esrafil?'
 This is right too, since you can't comprehend
 Him in his own essential nature, friend.
 We can't know the essential nature then—
 That's the condition of all common men,
 But eyes of perfect mystics still can view
 Essential natures and deep secrets too.
 What then is harder to see in existence
 And then to understand well than God's essence?
 When that's not hidden from those who are near 3655
 To Him, what essence can stay hidden here?
 The scholar's brain says, 'That's deep and obscure;
 Ignore such nonsense, as it's not secure.'
 'Weak one!' the Sufi master will then state.
 'It seems like that since it's beyond your state:
 Didn't the knowledge now revealed to you
 At first seem like the craziest nonsense too?
 From ten gaols through God's kindness you've been freed;
 Don't turn expanses to a cage—take heed!

*The agreement and concord of the negation and
affirmation of the same thing owing to the relativity
of different perspectives*

One can affirm things, then deny them too: 3660

Both can apply from different points of view.

‘*You did not throw when you threw*’* gives direction—

It proves both affirmation and negation:

You threw it—it flew from your hand that hour;

You didn’t throw it, for God used His power.

A human’s strength is limited—how then

Can sand defeat vast armies full of men?*

‘That handful’s yours, but it was I Who threw’—

Here’s affirmation and negation too.

Prophets are recognized by foes among men, 3665

*Just as those foes know theirs from others’ children:**

All their own children they can always tell

With numerous proofs and many signs as well,

But, out of envy, they instead will hide,

Claiming, ‘I can’t tell!’ but these foes have lied.

God says, ‘*He knows*’, so why elsewhere does He

Say, ‘*None knows them at all apart from Me*’?*

‘*They’re hidden under my domed tents*’* and no one

But God can recognize those ones for certain,

So see this as a relative thing too, 3670

For Noah’s known and isn’t known by you.

The annihilation and subsistence of the dervish

‘There is no dervish in the world,’ one said

‘And he’d be non-existent, if instead

There were one here: subsisting in God’s essence,

His attributes would be effaced in God’s ones.’

Candlelight in the sun is non-existent,

Yet it is still considered an existent—

Its essence still exists, for if you poke
 Cotton into it, that will burn with smoke;
 It's non-existent—naught's illuminated 3675
 By it; in sunlight it's annihilated:
 To jars of honey if you add *one cup*
Of vinegar, the honey soaks it up,
 And yet the vinegar will leave no taste,
 Although on weighing scales the cupful's traced.
 Before a lion deer will fall unconscious;
 That lion's being swamps their own. It's obvious.
 Analogies that show our work's deficient
 Next to God's come from love—they're not impertinent.
 The lover's pulse without restraint will race 3680
 Towards the king and claim an equal place;
 In this world no one seems so impolite,
 Yet none is so well-mannered far from sight.
 These are two poles—polite and impolite—
 Which relativity can still unite:
 He is ill-mannered from what you can see,
 Since his love-claim suggests some parity,
 But look in him then tell me what's to blame—
 The Sultan has effaced him and his claim.
 If Zayd's the subject of these words: '*Zayd died*',* 3685
 When he's no more, how is that justified?
 Zayd is the subject from the view of grammar,
 Though he's the object, death is here the killer.
 What kind of subject can he be like this—
 Effaced, he's lost all of his 'subjectness'.

*Story about the deputy of the Sadr-e Jahan who
 left Bukhara in fear of his life, only for his love to
 draw him back there, because a matter of life and
 death is not major for lovers*

Bukhara's *sadr* once had a slave who hid
 When he was blamed for what another did.

Confused, for ten long years he roamed and ran
In deserts, mountains, and through Khorasan.
After ten years his yearning meant that he 3690
Could not bear separation endlessly.
He thought, 'I cannot take more banishment.
Nothing heals feelings of abandonment.'
These lands are barren now from separation;
Dirt gives the water its discoloration.
The life-increasing wind gets filled with sickness
And fire turns ground beneath us into ashes.
Even heavenly gardens face disease:
Leaves yellow, rot, then drop off from the trees.
Separate from friends the intellect feels low, 3695
Just like an archer with a broken bow.
This separation made hell-fire so scorching,
And it makes old men's limbs continue shaking.
If I talk of this spark-like separation
Until the end I'll have said just a fraction.
Don't breathe a word about its burning then—
Just say, '*Lord, save me!*' and say it again.
Imagine what it's like to be apart
From things here that bring joy inside your heart:
Others enjoyed what you enjoy here, friend, 3700
But it still fled them wind-like in the end—
Don't love that thing. It will soon leave you too.
Escape from it before it flees from you!

*The appearance of the Holy Spirit in human form to Mary when
she was naked and bathing, and her taking refuge in God*

Before the passing of your prized possession
Like Mary say: '*I pray the Merciful One
Saves me from you!*'* She'd seen a form she found
Exhilarating, which made her heart pound:
Like sun and moon, the spirit all can trust
Rose up before her eyes from the ground's dust;
Beauty unveiled and rose up in this way 3705
Just as the sun appears each single day.

Mary's limbs shook at this strange interruption,
 For she was naked and feared some corruption.
 If Joseph had seen what then Mary saw,
 Like women he'd have cut his hands in awe.*
 Just like a rose in soil it magically
 Came up as if the heart's own fantasy.
 She lost her wits as though she had just dreamed;
 'I flee now to God's refuge!' she then screamed,
 For that pure-bosomed woman then had been 3710
 Accustomed to escape to the Unseen;
 And, since she'd seen this world's impermanence,
 She'd made a fortress from God's presence once,
 So, after death, she'd have a sanctuary
 Beyond the reach of every enemy.
 She saw none better than God's own protection,
 So chose her resting place in that direction.
 She'd seen some amorous glances which could start
 Fires to burn intellects and pierce men's hearts.
 God placed both king and army into slavery; 3715
 He made wise rulers fall unconscious easily.
 He owns such kings as slaves who do His will
 And He's made full moons look so thin and ill.
 Venus won't dare to breathe a word at all
 And Universal Intellect feels small.
 What can I say when I don't have the choice,
 When His strong furnace has burned out my voice?
 I'm that fire's smoke; I'm its proof from the King—
 Keep far *the nonsense they're interpreting!*
 Sunshine has no proof other than its light, 3720
 Which shines out from itself and gives us sight.
 How can mere shadows be His evidence?
 They're fit to show just His pre-eminence.
 His glory tells the truth to you instead;
 Perceptions lag behind, while He's ahead.
 They're for lame donkeys, and if you compare
 He rides the wind like arrows in the air.
 None even reaches His dust if He flees;
 If they try to, He blocks their way with ease.

All sense-perceptions lack tranquillity—
It's time for war, not for festivity:
Just like a falcon one of them will fly;
Another, arrow-like, tears through the sky;
Another's like a ship with sails at sea;
Another is retreating constantly.
On seeing in the distance some new prey
All those birds launch an ambush straight away.
They're left perplexed, though, when it vanishes;
Like owls, they head towards the wilderness.
They wait with one eye open, in this way
Hoping for reappearance of the prey,
But after a long wait, so wearily
They question, 'Was the prey there actually?'
It would be better if for just one hour
They'd rest, regaining all their strength and power.

3725
3730

If there were no night, greed could make a nation
Consume themselves with all their agitation.
The greed for profit would make men consume
Their bodies long before they reach the tomb.
The night descends on them like mercy's treasure,
So they can flee their greed for a short measure.
And if contraction ever comes to you,
That's good—don't tear your heart out as some do,
For you are spending when you feel expansion*
And that needs income from a prior transaction:
If it were always summer, then the sun
Would scorch the orchard, and would quickly burn
All flower-beds down to their roots inside,
And dried-up plants would not then be revived.
December's sour-faced, but it's kind, while summer
Will laugh with all, then burn them to a cinder,
So, in contraction, feel joy anyhow.
Be youthful and don't heavily crease your brow!
Children will laugh while learned men feel bitter;
Joy fills the lungs, but grief blocks up the liver.

3735
3740

The child looks to the stable like an ass,
 The wise to the Last Day, not things that pass;
 The child deems stable-straw food that can nurture,
 The sage sees he'll be slaughtered by a butcher—
 Straw given by the butcher will taste hideous; 3745
 He's set his scales up as he wants to weigh us.
 Eat wisdom's fodder, which God gave without
 His own desire. Shame you can't work it out!
 It seems that all you understand is bread,
 Even though '*Eat what He provides!*'* God said!
 God feeds you wisdom in degrees, my friend,
 So it won't choke you at the very end.
 You've closed your mouth and that's produced another
 That eats the morsels of the secret, brother.
 If you've cut off your body from the Devil 3750
 And his milk, you'll be blessed to a new level.

Mine's like the Turcoman's own half-cooked meat,
 But Hakim Sana'i's words are complete;
 In his *Divine Book* it is clarified
 By 'the Unseen's Sage' and 'the Mystics' Pride':
 'Eat grief, not bread, from those who make grief bigger.
 While sages take grief, children eat up sugar.'*
 Sugar of joy is picked from fields of grief;
 Joy is a wound, while grief brings it relief.
 When you see grief embrace it lovingly, 3755
 Then with perspective view reality!
 The wise see wine in grapes, though it seems distant;
 Lovers see things that are still non-existent.
 Two porters quarrelled just the other day:
 'Don't take it, let me in a manful way!'
 Since they saw profit in their toil and bother,
 Each tried to take the load back from the other.
 One sees in God's reward such a huge difference:
 God gives you gold, while men give you a pittance.
 God's golden treasure is a special kind, 3760
 For, when you die, it isn't left behind:

It races past your funeral procession
To stay in exile's grave as your companion.
Be dead now, to prepare for when you'll die.
You'll join eternal love like this on high.
Patience shows you that through your toil today
Your love's fair face and curls will come your way.
Grief is a mirror that's placed opposite
The striver who sees opposites in it—
After toil's turn the opposite appears: 3765
Expansive joy and glory to raise cheers.
Your own hand shows how opposites will function:
After it's closed, it opens up for certain.
If someone's hand is always closed or open,
This means that person's hand must have been broken.
One's deeds are regulated by these two;
They're vital, like a bird's two wings, for you.
When Mary suddenly grew agitated,
Like fish on land who had been relocated . . .

*The Holy Spirit tells Mary: 'I am a messenger from God to you.
Don't be agitated or hide from me, for this is God's command!'*

. . . Generous God's representative then said: 3770
'I come from Him. Trust me and don't feel dread.
Don't turn your gaze from God's exalted ones.
Don't draw back from His special confidants.'
As he said this, a ray of purest light
Rose out of his lips up to the stars' height.
'To nothingness would you flee my existence?
I'm like a king beyond in Non-existence.
My origin and home are in Non-being;
My form in front of Mary's all you're seeing.
I am a difficult form now to view— 3775
I'm the new moon and the heart's image too.
You cannot flee an image in your heart;
It goes with you wherever you depart.
But not the worthless transient fancies—they,
Just like a false dawn, quickly fade away.

I'm like the true dawn, made out of God's light,
 Whose day will never be replaced by night.
 Mary, don't cry out "*God's strength!*" out of fear,
 Since from *God's strength* I have descended here
 And it's my sustenance and origin: 3780
*God's strength's** light shone before speech could begin.
 You seek out refuge now in God from me,
 But I've been there since Pre-eternity.
 I am that refuge. I've saved you so often
 Now you seek refuge and must have forgotten.'
 Failure to recognize is the worst thing:
 In her arms, but unskilled in love-making.
 You think your friend's the stranger, and you want
 To name joy 'grief'; you're truly ignorant.
 Such a date palm is Our Beloved's grace; 3785
 We're thieves and His palm is our gibbet's place.
 Musk wafts from our commander's locks. No brain
 Remains with us, and so this forms our chain.
 His grace flows like the Nile, and now that we
 Are Pharaohs it becomes blood instantly.
 The blood says, 'I am water none must spill;
 I'm Joseph, but a wolf to foes who'd kill.
 Don't you see that a stalwart friend can be
 Snake-like when you become his enemy?
 His substance hasn't changed from what you knew; 3790
 He's only turned bad from your point of view.

*The vakil resolves through love to return to Bukhara without
 worrying about his own welfare*

Leave Mary's candle lit, because that lover
 Whose heart's aflame is going to Bukhara
 Impatiently and in a blazing furnace—
 Read in the tale of the great *sadr* to learn this.
 Bukhara stands for knowledge's true source;
 All who possess it are Bukharans of course.
 When near the shaikh you're in Bukhara too,
 So don't look down on that place seen by few.

Its ebb and flow forms such a major hurdle 3795

That none reach this Bukhara but the humble.

Happy the man whose *self is brought down low!*

Stubbornness ruins others. It's your foe.

The exile from the *sadr* had torn apart

The lover's soul's foundation part by part.

He said, 'I will return to faith once more

Although I was an infidel before.

I'll go back there and fall down at the feet

Of that great *sadr* whose thoughts are always sweet.

"I've flung my soul before you!" I will say, 3800

"Revive me or chop off my head today!"

Being dead and slain near you, O moon of graces,

Is better than being king in other places.

More than a hundred times I've tried this out—

Without you my life won't taste sweet, no doubt.

My wish, sing me the tune of Resurrection!

Kneel, she-camel! My joy has reached perfection.

Earth, swallow up my tears. They will suffice.

Soul, drink the pure draught straight from paradise.

Welcome, my Eid! You've come back like last year. 3805

O breeze, how sweet is what has wafted here.

'Farewell, my friends! I've headed out,' he said,

'To that *sadr* whose commands are all obeyed.

Each moment I'm more roasted in the heat,

But, come what may, I'll go and not retreat.

And though he makes himself so stony-hearted,

Towards Bukhara my soul has departed,

That is the seat of my beloved king—

"*Love of one's homeland*" means no other thing.'

*A lover asked her estranged lover, 'Which city did you find the
finest, the largest, the most magnificent, the most bountiful,
and the most heart-expanding?'*

His sweetheart asked her lover, 'My young man, 3810

You've seen fine towns while travelling, so can

You tell me which is the most fair around?’

‘The town where the beloved can be found.
Wherever her royal carpet’s spread in size
Is a huge plain, even small *needles’ eyes*;
And any place where moon-like Josephs dwell
Is heaven, even deep inside a well.’

His friends prevent him from returning to Bukhara and make threats. He responds, ‘I don’t care!’

‘You clueless one!’ a counsellor then said,

‘If you can, think about what lies ahead:
Ponder your past and future rationally!

3815

Only moths burn themselves so passionately.

How will you reach Bukhara? You’re insane

And should be bound in prison with a chain.

The angry *sadr* champs iron as he tries

To find your whereabouts with twenty eyes.

He’s sharpening a knife for you alone—

He’s like a starving dog and you’re the bone!

You have escaped him once when God let you,

So why head back to gaol? What’s wrong with you?

If you had gaolers chasing now, we’d say

3820

You’ll need to use your wits to get away,

But nobody is chasing you at all,

So why yourself create an obstacle?’

A secret love had kept him prisoner;

But this was not seen by that counsellor.

A hidden gaoler chases gaolers too—

If not, why do these curs act like they do?

Into their souls the king of love’s rage came,

Forcing them to a thuggish life of shame:

His rage strikes, saying, ‘Beat him!’ On account

3825

Of hidden thugs I’ve wept a huge amount.

Whoever you see in decline, though he

Appears alone, a thug’s his company.

If he knew of God’s presence, he would moan

And rush to the Most Powerful Sultan’s throne,

Scattering dust on his own face in shame,
For refuge from the frightening demon's aim.
You're less than ants, but you thought you might be
A prince; that's why, blind fool, you couldn't see.
These false wings filled you up with self-deception 3830
And drew you to a harmful self-destruction.
You can fly high if you keep your wings light,
But if they're muddied there's no hope for flight.

*Due to love, the lover says, 'I don't care!' to his adviser
and scolder*

'How long will you advise me? Please refrain,
For I've been tied up with a heavy chain
That's harder to endure than your advice.
Your expert didn't know love and its price:
The jurists have no teaching they can offer
About how love increases pain we suffer.
Don't threaten me with death, for desperately 3835
I thirst for my own blood. What's death to me?'
Each moment a new death is found by lovers;
Their deaths are not one kind; they've many others,
For Guidance's Soul gave lives by the score:
Each moment he will sacrifice some more,
Since for each he gets ten in compensation:
'*Ten of their like*'*—recite this revelation.
'If that Beloved sheds my blood, I'll throw
My life before home, dancing as I go.
I've tested it. Death is this life for me— 3840
When I leave life it's for eternity.'
Murder me, murder me, my trusty friends!
In being killed there's life that never ends.
Eternal Soul, you who make all cheeks glow,
Draw up my soul to union You bestow!
Love for my lover roasts my bowels, but still
*If He wants to walk on my eyes, He will.**
Speak Persian although Arabic thrills more;
Love has a hundred languages in store,

But all those languages are dumbstruck when 3845
 That Pure Beloved's scent wafts here again.
 I'll stop, for the Beloved will speak now—
 Be all ear! *God knows what's best anyhow.*
 If lovers should repent, beware, for they
 Will teach drunk on the gallows come what may.
 This lover may be going to Bukhara,
 But teachings aren't what he is chasing after—
 The Loved One's beauty is the lover's teacher,
 His face their notebook, lesson, and class lecture.
 They're silent, but their inner repetition 3850
 Rises up to His throne and seat in heaven.
 Their lesson is to whirl in ecstasy,
 Not to read texts or spout philosophy.
 The 'chain' of this group is His musky tress,
 Their 'circle case' concerns His curls no less.
 If someone asks about 'the purse's case',*
 Then say: 'God's treasure's not found in that place.'
 If there's talk of types of divorce, don't you
 Find fault, as this evokes Bukhara too.
 Mention of things has special influences, 3855
 As attributes have their own substances.
 You prosper in Bukhara with your virtues,
 But being truly humble is what frees you:
 Mere knowledge couldn't burden this Bukharan
 Who'd concentrated on the Sun of Vision.
 Whoever's found true vision through seclusion
 Shuns knowledge gained through theory and tuition;
 If someone's seen the beauty of the soul,
 He won't be moved by sciences at all;
 Vision is knowledge's superior, so 3860
 Most men succumb to this world down below—
 They see this world as theirs and so immediate,
 But think the other world is bought on credit.

The lover-bondsman turns towards Bukhara

That lover's heart throbbed as he wept blood tears,
 Heading fast to Bukhara with no fears.
Scorching sands felt to him like silk, so cool,
 And the great Oxus seemed a little pool;
Wilderness seemed a rose garden—he'd fall
 From laughter like a rose that's grown too tall.
Candy's from Samarkand, but his lips found 3865
 It in Bukhara, and to it felt bound.
Bukhara, you who'd boost intelligence,
 Removed my faith and knowledge all at once.
I'm crescent-like, for I seek the full moon;
 In this world's waiting line, I want him soon.
Bukhara's skyline came within his sight
 And passion made that black form brilliant white.
He fell flat out unconscious suddenly,
 His mind flown to the source of mystery.
Men dabbed his head and face then with rosewater, 3870
 Not knowing the rosewater of his lover.
He'd seen a hidden rose garden; love had
 Cut him off from himself like one gone mad.
You're not fit for such breath, your heart is stone;
 Though cane, you have no sugar of your own.
You follow just the brain that you still bear;
 Of *armies you can't see** you're unaware.

*The reckless lover enters Bukhara and his friends warn
 him against showing himself*

He entered in Bukhara happily,
 Near his beloved and tranquillity,
Like drunken mystics who all gladly race 3875
 To heaven, telling the moon: 'Let's embrace!'
All the Bukharans told him, 'Get away!
 Don't let a soul see you. You cannot stay.

That angry ruler's looking for you here
 To take his vengeance for each passing year.
 Don't walk towards your own blood—don't rely
 On clever words and spells: you're going to die.
 You were the great *sadr's* deputy before,
 His master engineer—not any more.
 After committing treachery, you fled, 3880
 So having got free why come back instead?
 You fled grief using so much trickery—
 Has fate returned you or stupidity?
 Your intellect scorns Mercury, but fate
 Makes fools of learned intellects—just wait!
 Hares who hunt lions have no luck—where is
 Your cunning and unrivalled cleverness?
 Destiny's spells are numerous times as great;
Fate makes the open field a narrow strait.
 There are a hundred paths and sanctuaries, 3885
 But they are blocked by dragon-fate with ease.'

The lover answers those who reproach and threaten him

'I suffer now from dropsy,' he then said.
 'Water draws me, though I know I'll be dead.
 None suffering dropsy can flee water still,
 Though they know from experience it will kill;
 My hands and belly swell, but can't abate
 My love for water. It's a sorry fate.
 When asked about my inner state, I'll say:
 "Would that the sea still flowed in me today!"
 Belly, get burst by water! Now if I 3890
 Die from this, it is a good way to die.
 I envy water I see in the stream.
 "I wish I were in its place now," I dream.
 With body swollen, drum-shaped, I compose
 Rhythms for love of water as a rose.
 If Gabriel sheds my blood, like soil below
 Gulp after gulp I'd swallow what would flow.

I drink blood like the earth and embryo;
While I'm in love, this is all that I know.
I boil above the flame like pots of stew 3895
And drink blood all the time as dry sands do.
I now repent that I tried trickery
To flee what his rage wished to do with me.
Let him spur on his rage at my drunk soul;
He's Eid; the slaughtered beast is my small role.*
Whether the buffalo should sleep or feed,
We nurture it before we make it bleed.
Moses' cow's tail once resuscitated—
Likewise my parts revive the liberated.*
Moses' cow was sacrificed; God willed 3900
Its small tail to revive one who'd been killed:
He sprang up from the spot where he lay dead;
"Strike him with part of her!" the Lord had said.*
Slaughter this cow, my friends, if your decision
Is to revive the souls that have true vision.
On death, I left being mineral then grew
And changed from plant to animal form too,
Then died to that, to be a human here—
When did death make me less? What should I fear?
I'll die to humanness at the next battle, 3905
Then spread my wings and soar above each angel:
I must transcend the angels' status too—
*All perishes except God's face** proves true.
Sacrificed, I'll die to the angel then
And go beyond imaginings of men.
I'll then be Non-existent, and I'll hear
"To Him we are returning"* sound so clear.
Death is one thing agreed on by mankind;
Water of life is very hard to find.
Leave this side of the stream just like a lily, 3910
Like dropsy sufferers, seek out death greedily.
Water they seek means death, yet they won't rest
Till they can drink it. *God knows what is best.*
Cold one who loves material comforts, you
Flee the Beloved scared for your life too.

Even girls think you're shameful—look above
 As spirits celebrate the sword of love.
 You've seen the stream—empty your jug inside!
 How can that water now escape outside?
 When the jug's water enters, it's effaced;
 Once in the stream and merged, it can't be traced.
 Its essence stays; its attributes have gone—
 It won't be less or ugly from now on.
 I've hung myself like this on his palm tree,
 Because I'd fled—it's my apology.'

3915

*That lover reaches his beloved once he has washed his
 hands of himself*

He touched his head and face then to the floor
 Before the *sadr*, with eyes about to pour.
 Expectantly, all people looked ahead—
 Would he burn him or hang him there instead?
 'He'll show this wretched man who's desperate
 What time shows men who are unfortunate.'
 Like moths, he saw the flames as light, then he
 Gave up life by approaching foolishly.
 Love's candle has a very major difference,
 It's radiance in more radiance in more radiance;
 The opposite of candles with flames' heat,
 It looks like fire, but is completely sweet.

3920

*Description of that mosque that kills lovers and of the
 death-seeking, reckless lover who became a guest there*

Listen, good fellow, to this tale today:
 There was a mosque close to the town of Rayy.*
 The children of those who had spent one night
 In there were orphaned by the dawn's first light;
 Strangers with few clothes even to put on
 Were in their graves like stars when it was dawn.
 Pay close attention! Dawn has come—awake!
 Cut short your sleep. Don't make that same mistake.

3925

'Some evil spirits haunt it!' people said.
 'They use blunt swords to leave the guests there dead.'
'It's talismanic magic,' some would say,
 'That is the foe that takes their lives away.'
Another said, 'Put a sign on the door
 That clearly warns: "Don't stay here any more!"
If you like life, don't stay a single night
 Or death will come, though it's now out of sight.'
Another said, 'Lock it at night! If men
 Come heedlessly, they'll be locked outside then.'

3930

A guest comes to that mosque

One night, a guest came there who'd heard about
 Its stunning reputation, to find out
The truth by trying an experiment,
 For he was very brave and confident.
'I care so little for my head and belly,
 Or one grain being lost from this life's treasury,
So tell the body's form right now: "Begone!"
 The husk's worth little when I will live on.
*I was breathed into** from God's grace. Take heed!
 I'm God's breath, separate from the body's reed.
I hope to see the pearl escape its shell
 And that His breath survives this place as well.
*"Sincere one, long for death!"** the Lord has said.
 I'll give my soul sincerely, unafraid.'

3935

*The people of the mosque blame that lover guest for wanting
 to sleep there and warn him of its dangers*

They said, 'Beware, don't sleep here or remain.
 Your own life's foe will pound you just like grain.
Stranger, you do not realize that men
 Who sleep here die in consequence, so then
It's not by chance or a coincidence;
 It's known by all who have intelligence,

3940

A cruel death in the middle of the night
 Awaits those who should stay here overnight.
 A hundred times we've seen this, not just once;
 It isn't blind belief through ignorance.
 The Prophet said, "Religion's consultation,"
 And that's the opposite of self-deception.
 "Be true in friendship" is the wisest counsel.
 Man's treacherous and dog-like when deceitful.
 We urge you out of love, as we're not treacherous—
 Don't turn away from reason and from justice!"

3945

The lover's answer to those who scold him

He said, 'O counsellors, is it not clear
 I've had enough already of life here?
 I am a vagrant seeking to be hit—
 Don't hope for tramps' minds to be sound and fit.
 I'm not a tramp who seeks out food, but one
 Who seeks out his own death without concern,
 Not one who steals your money, but one who
 Crosses that bridge more quickly than most do;
 Not one who hangs around near stores, for instance,
 But one who runs away from his existence.
 Death and departure are all that I love:
 The caged bird longs to flee and soar above;
 Its cage is in the garden, where it sees
 Beyond the rosebush and the lovely trees.
 A flock of birds come to the cage and sing
 Their happy songs of freedom on the wing.
 The caged bird, due to that scene, now no longer
 Seeks food, nor has much patience or composure.
 Through every gap it sticks its head out now,
 And tries to shake the fetter off somehow;
 Its heart and soul are in this sense outside—
 Imagine when the cage is opened wide!
 It's not the caged bird with depression that's
 Surrounded by a circle of fierce cats:

3950

3955

Can that possess amid the grief and fear
Any desire to leave the cage down here?
It wants more cages built around its own
To ward off harm from cats, as it feels prone.

The love of Galen is for the life in this world, for his skill is useful
here, and he does not profess any skill that is useful in that other
marketplace. He sees himself in the same position over there
as ordinary people*

The scholar Galen said once, people claim,
Due to desire for this world and his aim:
'Half of my soul's intact—I'm satisfied
I see the world through a mule's fat backside.'
He sees a file of cats around him there;
His bird fears it can't fly up in the air.
Only this world exists to his perception,
Since he can't see the hidden Resurrection.
God's kindness draws the baby gently out,
But it retreats because it's filled with doubt:
Though it is being led out by God's grace,
It stays inside the womb in any case,
Saying: 'If I fall out of this great city,
I can't come back and that would be a pity.
Out in that dirty town is there a door
Through which I can gaze at this womb once more?
Is there a path, even one needle-wide,
Through which to see the womb while I'm outside?'
Of other worlds this baby's also blind,
Uninitiated, like Galen's kind.
It doesn't know the juices found inside
Arrived as aid from that 'bad' world outside,
Just like the world's four elements, no less,
Which gain a hundred aids from Placelessness.
Water is in the bird's cage and some grain,
But they came from the garden and the plain.

The Prophets see the garden at the stage 3975
 When they're released and transferred from the cage.
 Freed from both Galen and the world, they'll soon
 Appear up in the heavens like the moon.
 And if those words weren't Galen's actually,
 My answer's not for him specifically,
 But for the one who did make that remark,
 And, far from light-filled hearts, lives in the dark.
 Because it heard the cats stay '*Stop!*' its soul
 Has turned into a mouse that seeks a hole.
 That's why his soul perceived, just like a mouse, 3980
 This world as a fit place to build a house.
 It started building down here with the goal
 Of gaining knowledge fit for such a hole.
 It chose the skills that would give benefit
 And would prove here the most appropriate.
 Since it held back its heart from trying to flee,
 That road closed to its body fatefully.
 Spiders aren't of the phoenix's great ilk,
 Or else they wouldn't live on flimsy silk.
 The cat has pushed its paws inside the cage; 3985
 They're called 'cramp' and 'delirium', good sage.
 The cat is death and its claws are disease—
 It strikes the bird and rips its wings with ease.
 Running to find the cure is one with sickness;
 Death is the judge, this sick man is the witness.
 This witness comes like the official who
 Summons you to the court-house, forcing you
 To beg respite with hope you'll get away—
 Will he accede, or order, 'Come today!?'
 Seeking respite means remedies you can 3990
 Use on your body's tattered cloak, good man.
 He'll come back angry once much time has passed:
 'How long you've had! You should feel shame at last.'
 Jealous one, beg forgiveness, use your head
 Before the day comes which you deeply dread.
 The one who rides into the dark this way
 Pulls back his heart from that light straight away—

He's fleeing from the witness and his aim,
But will be called to judgment all the same.

*The people of the mosque blame the visitor again for wanting
to sleep in the mosque*

Leave this behind—head to that man from earlier 3995

Who came at night to that mosque as a visitor.

'Don't be a fool! Begone!' the people said,

'Or do you wish to pawn your soul instead?

From distance it looks easy, but it's worse;

This path is such a hard one to traverse.

Men hanged themselves as their necks broke and tried

To grasp support, but all too late. They died.

Before the war starts, people's hearts can see

Evil distinct from good so easily,

But once inside the battlefield how can 4000

That not be difficult for any man?

You're not a lion, so take heed and keep

Your distance; doom's the wolf, your soul the sheep.

If you're an Abdal and your sheep's become

A lion, then don't fret! Your death won't come.

Who's an Abdal? One who's been substituted;

To vinegar his wine has been transmuted.

But you are drunk, foolhardy, and now dare

To dream you are a lion. Halt! Beware!

God said about foes with hypocrisy: 4005

*'Among themselves they act courageously!'**

Among themselves they're brave, but in the fray

They're scared like women who should keep away.

The Prophet, King of the Unseen, said: 'Son,

Bravery's no use before the war's begun.'

Mouths foam when drunk on talk of the next battle,

But in that actual fight what use is spittle?

One draws his sword out, ready at war's mention,

But in the fray it's wrapped up like an onion.

His heart seeks wounds when war's anticipated, 4010

But with one needle his bag is deflated.

I'm stunned by those who're seeking purity,
 But, at the time of scrubbing, choose to flee.
 Love's just a claim; pain is your proof, my friend.
 If you've no proof, your claim's void in the end.
 When this judge asks for proof, don't feel distressed,
 But kiss the snake to find the treasure-chest!*

That harshness is not aimed at you, but at
 Bad qualities in you. Remember that!
 When a man beats his carpet clean, we trust 4015
 His target's not the carpet, but the dust.
 If a harsh man should lash his horse, don't grumble—
 His aim is to make sure that it won't stumble,
 So it will start to trot in a straight line;
 Fermenting grapes are sealed to turn to wine.
 'You struck the orphan many times!' one said,
 'Didn't God's vengeance hold you back with dread?'
 'When did I ever strike him?' he replied.
 'I struck the demons that he had inside.'
 If your own mother screams, 'May you die!' she 4020
 Means that bad nature and iniquity.
 People who flee from their own reformation
 Forsake their dignity and reputation.
 They flee the battleground because of scolders,
 And turn to sodomites instead of soldiers.
 Don't listen to the babbler's boasts again.
 Don't line up at the battle with such men.
 'They would have just increased confusion.' Run
 As far as you can from each feeble one,
 For if they go with you to war today, 4025
 Your army will feel empty soon like hay;
 They'll join your side, then flee and break apart,
 Making your battle-line weak at its heart.
 Without such men a smaller army's better
 Than one which, through such hypocrites, grows bigger:
 Pick almonds that taste sweet, though they be few,
 Not huge piles that contain the bitter too.

For rattling, sweet and bitter are the same;
The defect is inside and that's your aim.
The infidel has theorized about 4030
The next world sceptically, and now his doubt
Scares him: he roams but doesn't know way stations—
The blind at heart walk with such trepidations.
How does he walk and not know the right way?
With anguished heart and dithering all day.
If someone tells him, 'This route isn't right.'
He stops there in his tracks because of fright.
But if his heart had learnt the right direction
How then could their words make him suffer tension?
Don't go with camel-like men, who sink down 4035
When they feel stress, and lie there with a frown.
They'll run away and leave you with no one
After they boast of power like Babylon.
Do not expect fair-looking men to fight;
Peacocks are not the right birds to invite—
Don't give your carnal soul an invitation
To tempt you with sweet talk from your high station.

*How Satan told the Qoraysh:** 'Go to war with Mohammad and
I will help you and call my tribe for support and how he fled
when the two battle-lines faced each other'

Satan became the army's chief this way:
He said: 'I'll be your helper from today!'^{*}
When the Qoraysh then made their preparation 4040
Before the armies came in confrontation,
Satan saw angels lined up on the flanks
Prepared to fight with the believers' ranks.
Those troops you couldn't see* lined up so near
That they set Satan's soul on fire with fear.
He turned around and started to withdraw,
Saying: 'What an amazing troop I saw!
I fear God and against Him I've no aid.
Begone! I see what you can't—be afraid!'

Hareth said, 'You are in Soraqa's guise, 4045
 So why did you not forewarn of demise?'
 'It's only now that I have seen destruction.'
 'Just feeblest Arabs entered in your vision;
 You see just them, but you're base anyhow
 For time to talk has passed—the war starts now.
 You promised yesterday, "I swear success
 Will be yours through my help and won't grow less."
 Then, you were the whole army's surety;
 Now you are useless, vile, and cowardly.
 After we've swallowed your words on each duel, 4050
 You flee to hot baths and use us as fuel.'
 When Hareth said this, that cursed enemy
 Grew angry at his chiding, and then he
 Drew back his hand and turned round to depart,
 Because these words had brought pain to his heart.
 Then, suddenly, he struck him on his chest,
 Slaying the helpless one as he knows best.
 When he had ruined worlds of men, he spoke:
 '*I now am quit of you!*'* This is no joke.
 He struck him on his chest and made him fall; 4055
 Fear of God made him run then from it all.

The self and Satan are one body; they
 Make themselves look like two in their own way.
 And angel and true knowledge are united,
 Although for wisdom's sake they seem divided.
 You have a foe in your most hidden part
 Which fights with your own faith, your brain, and heart.
 Lizard-like it will launch attacks, and then
 It scampers quickly down a hole again.
 It has so many holes inside men's hearts 4060
 From which to stick its head out as it darts.
 It's called '*the one who slinks back*':* from men's souls
 The Devil slips inside its secret holes.
 It shrinks back in the way that hedgehogs do,
 Popping their heads back out when they want to.

God called that Devil '*he who shrinks back*'* for

The hedgehog's action is so similar:

It hides its head for periods due to fear

A savage hunter might then hurry near,

Until it's safe to stick its head back out;

4065

It can foil snakes with such tricks—have no doubt!

If his self hadn't robbed you from inside,

How could the robbers touch you from outside?

Because of that thug, lust, your heart will bleed,

Captive to covetousness and petty greed.

That inner hired thug has made you depraved,

So when the others come you'll not be saved.

Heed what the Prophet counselled long ago:

'*Between your two sides is your fiercest foe.*'

Don't pay attention to its pomp, but flee,

4070

For, Satan-like, it quarrels endlessly.

For this world and for fighting others too

It's made eternal pain seem light to you.

If it makes death seem light, don't be astonished—

There's so much more its magic has accomplished.

Magic can turn straw to a mountain, or

Transform a massive mountain to mere straw.

It makes the ugly pretty in men's view,

And pretty things seem ugly then to you.

Magic's work is to breathe and then transform

4075

Realities far from their previous norm.

It shows a man to be an ass, and can

Transform an ass into a marvellous man.

A sorcerer who does that is in you:

Temptation's mystery's hidden from your view.

In that world where there are such sorceries,

Resisters have great powers as strong as these.

In that plain where the poison grows, my son,

The antidote grows too for everyone.

The antidote says, 'Seek a shield from me.

4080

I'm closer than the poison, if you see.

Its words are magic, but they cause destruction;

My words are magic, yet they give protection.'

*The scolders repeat their advice to that visitor to the mosque
that kills guests*

‘The Prophet said, “*Clear talk has sorcery*,”
 And that great hero spoke so truthfully.
 Don’t be so dumb! Go back the way you came!
 Don’t make us and the mosque receive more blame,
 For foes speak out of enmity, and they
 Will set fire to us on the following day,
 Claiming: “A cruel man strangled him. No noose. 4085
 The murderer’s safe due to that mosque excuse:
 He easily can give the mosque the blame,
 And leave scot-free due to that mosque’s bad name.”
 Brave man, don’t lay suspicion on us. We
 Are far from safe from our foes’ trickery.
 Don’t be so stupid! Don’t be a mad fool!
 You cannot measure Saturn with a rule.
 Men tried their luck as you wish to in vain,
 Then tore their beards out, clump by clump, with pain.
 Cut short this talk. It’s time for you to go. 4090
 Don’t cast yourself and us in much more woe.’

*The visitor answers them and tells the parable of the guard of the
cultivated land who, by beating a mere tambour, fended off a camel
on whose back they were playing Shah Mahmud’s* kettledrum*

He said, ‘I’m not a devil, honestly!
 And so “*God give me strength*.”* won’t stifle me.’
 A boy who used to guard a field would beat
 His kettledrum to make the birds retreat,
 Scattering away because of that drum’s sound,
 To leave the field safe with no birds around.
 When the great Shah Mahmud passed by that way
 He pitched a huge tent near it, for he’d stay
 With a huge army like a galaxy, 4095
 All-conquering brave-hearts who fought valiantly.

The army's kettledrum was on a camel,
A Bactrian which strutted like a cockerel.
That kettledrum was banged each night and day
When they returned or set out for the fray.
The camel entered that field for the wheat;
The boy took out his drum, began to beat.
'Don't bang your little drum!' a wise man said,
'For it is used to drums and won't feel dread.
What good's your small drum? Don't you realize
It carries one that's twenty times its size?'

4100

I am a lover, sacrificed for 'No!'
My soul's the bandstand for the drum of woe.
These threats are like that little drum next to
What my eyes have already had to view.
I'm not one of those frail ones who would end
His wayfaring due to imaginings, friend.
I'm like the Ismailis: I lack dread;
Or like Ishmael, with no care for my head.*
From pomp and ostentation I am free—
Say 'Come!'* He told my soul 'Come!' didn't he?
The Prophet said, '*When sure of recompense
The generous one will meet all the expense.*'
Whoever sees a hundredfold return
Will rush to pay first, since he wants to earn.
For this men join the marketplace to trade:
To spend when profit can be easily made;
With gold inside their purses they will sit
Waiting for more to come, for spending it.
When one sees goods more valuable than his,
His love for his own then diminishes.
He had stayed keen, because he hadn't known
Any more valuable gifts than his own.
With knowledge, skills, and art it's similar
Once one sees something that's superior.
When there's none better, life is loved by all;
When something better comes though, it seems small.

4105

4110

To small girls lifeless dolls have much more worth
 Than life, until they grow up and give birth.
 Your dolls are fancies and imaginings— 4115
 If you remain a child, you need such things.
 But when your soul leaves that for unification,
 It needs no senses and imagination.
 No confidant's here to speak openly,
 So I'll stop. *God knows best our harmony.*
 Like snow, wealth and the body melt to naught;
 God is their buyer, for *The Lord has bought.**
 The snow seems better than the price for you,
 Because, uncertain, you doubt what is true.
 And your conjecture is so strange that it 4120
 Does not seek certainty's fine realm one bit.
 O son, conjecture thirsts for certainty,
 And, bird-like, flaps its wings incessantly.
 On gaining knowledge, wings then turn to feet;
 Certainty's scent makes knowledge then complete.
 On this inspired path, knowledge is inferior
 To certainty, though it excels conjecture.
 I tell you knowledge seeks out certainty
 And that seeks vision gained immediately.
 Seek this—'Alhaykom's' chapter's where to go, 4125
 After 'Kalla' and after 'If you know.*'
 Knowledge takes you to vision; you can see
 Hell for yourself once you have certainty.
 Vision is born of that without delay.
 A thought comes from a fancy the same way.
 In 'alhaykom' it's said transparently—
*Knowledge of it to vision of certainty.**
 But knowledge and conjecture fail the same;
 My head does not turn to react to blame.
 Once I ate halva from him, the first bite 4130
 Made my eyes see him and become so bright.
 I tread with boldness, since I'm going home,
 Unlike blind men who tremble as they roam.
 The thing God said to raise smiles from the rose
 He told my heart, which now continually grows,

And that touch that made cypresses stand straight,
And that which wild rose and narcissus ate,
And that which sweetened each cane's heart and soul,
And that which made a Turk so beautiful,
And that which made the eyebrows like love's magnet, 4135
And cheeks to blush just like a pomegranate,
And gave the tongue spells that must be divine,
And Ja'far's pure gold* to the lowly mine.
The day the armoury's doors were opened, glances
Which tease came from the archers: from their stances
They aimed at me, driving me thus insane—
They made me love both thanks and sugar-cane.
I am in love with that one to whom all
Belong. His coral's guards are mind and soul.
I don't boast normally, but when I do 4140
Like water I quench fires without ado.
How should I steal from treasures that He
Protects? His aid makes me act brazenly:
Whoever's back the sun warms acts the same—
He'll be hard-nosed and not feel fear or shame.
His face is like the face of the bright sun:
Veils are for it to rend, and foes to burn.
Each Prophet sent was hard-nosed similarly,
Defeating armies single-handedly;
And never turning round with grief or fear, 4145
He took the whole world on while present here.
The rock is hard-nosed and its eyes are bold;
Among brickbats it won't let fear take hold—
Brickbats were made hard by a mere brickmaker;
The rock though was made hard by the Creator.
Even if sheep are numerous in the pastures,
How can the butcher ever fear their numbers?
'Each is a shepherd': with the Prophet being
A shepherd, men are flocks he's overseeing.*
The shepherd isn't scared when they're rebellious— 4150
He shields them from both heat and cold regardless.
If he yells at them, this is actually done
Out of the love he has for everyone.

New Fortune whispers constantly: 'I will
 Give you much suffering, but don't you grieve still!
 I'll send you so much sorrow that you'll cry,
 To shield you from the evil people's eye—
 I'll make you bitter with these sorrows, to
 Compel the evil eye to move from you.
 Aren't you a hunter seeking me, a minion 4155
 Flung down prostrate in front of my opinion.
 You dream up schemes to reach me, but you are
 Helpless when kept apart so very far.
 Your pain looks for a way to reach me—I
 Could hear last night from you each aching sigh.
 Without requiring you to wait, tomorrow
 I could give access and show tracks to follow
 To flee time's dangerous whirlpool finally
 And reach the treasure of My unity.'
 When you arrive the sweet taste you will gain 4160
 Is in proportion to the journey's pain—
 You'll reach your final home and destination
 Only once you've borne trials of separation.

*Comparison of the believer's fleeing and impatience during affliction
 with the agitation and resistance of chick-peas and other such vegetables
 in the boiling-pot, and their rushing up to jump out*

Look at the chick-pea in the pot and how
 It leaps when heated by the stove right now.
 While being boiled it rises constantly
 Up to the top. Listen to the chick-pea:
 'Why are you boiling me now, after you
 Have paid for me? Why treat me as you do?'
 The cook then hits it with her spoon to say: 4165
 'Boil properly! Don't try to jump away!
 I'm not doing this because I'm harming you,
 But so you'll taste good and be wholesome too.
 As food, you'll blend in with the soul, and so
 I'm not doing this to make you suffer woe.
 You drank in watered fields while fresh and green—
 That drinking was for this fire.' This must mean

His mercy's prior to His wrath*—that's best
For it means mercy is what sets your test.
His mercy comes before His wrath*—this way 4170
Being's capital can be acquired today:
Through food our skin and flesh can grow then serve
As objects to be melted by His love.
If all this boiling causes harm at all
Such that you give up all your capital,
Grace will come to excuse it straight away:
'You've washed and stepped from that stream,' it will say.
The cook says, 'Chick-pea, you fed in the spring—
Pain is your guest now; treat it well. Its king
Might witness it come back with praise for you 4175
When it goes home and shares its point of view.'
Then, the Bestower might be much more generous
And come Himself, making all bounties envious.
I'm Abraham; you're my son—lay your head.
'*I see I'll sacrifice you*'* we've all read.
Lay it before wrath with calm heart, because
I want to cut your throat as Ishmael's was.*
I'll chop your head off, but it's an exception,
Immune to death and to decapitation.
Your aim's been to submit yourself for ever— 4180
Muslim, you always have to seek surrender.

Chick-pea, keep boiling painfully with persistence
Until you have no self nor self-existence.
Though you laugh gaily now inside earth's garden,
You're really flowers of the soul and vision.
If you should leave this place for one perfected,
You'll be a morsel and then resurrected.
Become food, nourishment, and thought—don't struggle!
Then milk, be now a lion of the jungle.*
You grew out of His attributes initially— 4185
Return to them now eagerly and nimbly.
You came down from the clouds, the sun, and sky,
Became His attributes, went back on high.

As rain and heat you came down, and you should
 Return with attributes deemed very good.
 Once with the sun, the clouds, and stars, your lot
 Was to become soul, action, words, and thought.
 Animal being comes from plant's death: recite
 '*Kill me my trusty friends!*'* It now sounds right.
 After checkmate comes victory: you have heard 4190
 '*There's life in my death*'*—vouch then for each word!
 Action, sincerity, and speech became
 The angels' food, and went up to its aim.
 That morsel turned to food for Man, and he
 Rose from inanimateness magically.
 I'll give a more extensive explanation
 Of this point in a subsequent location.
 From heaven continually a caravan
 Arrives, trades, then returns all to a plan.
 Proceed too by your own choice, happily, 4195
 Not like a thief with loathing, bitterly.
 If I say bitter words to you, this is
 Only to clean you of all bitterness.
 Frozen grapes by cold water can be thawed;
 They won't stay frozen once cold water's poured—
 When your heart fills with blood through anguishes
 You'll be released this way from bitterness.

*A comparison exemplifying the way a believer becomes patient once
 he understands whether tribulation is for better or for worse*

A dog that's not for hunting has no collar,
 Just as uncooked food lacks a hint of flavour.
 'Dear cook, since it's this way,' the chick-pea said, 4200
 'I'll happily boil, if you give me your aid,
 For when I boil you are the engineer—
 Hit me now sweetly with your ladle, dear!
 I'm elephant-like—beat me, brand me too!
 I'll then not dream of India thanks to you,
 But just submit to boiling, to discover
 A way to the embrace of my true lover.'

Once they're too self-sufficient, men rebel;
A dreaming elephant does this as well—
When such an elephant should dream of India, 4205
It will turn nasty and not hear its keeper.

*How the lady cook apologized to the chick-pea, and the wisdom
in her boiling the chick-pea*

The lady cook told it, 'For what it's worth,
I was before, like you, a piece of earth.
Once I drank ardent struggle down, I grew
Acceptable and most deserving too.'
In time's world, I boiled till I grew so hot,
And then boiled more inside the body's pot.
These boilings helped me make the senses richer;
I turned to spirit, then I was your teacher.
Though when inanimate, I'd say, 'Now hurry 4210
To knowledge and the soul's traits and don't worry.'
I've been endowed with soul, so now let me
Get boiled, to pass from animality.
Appeal to God that you won't stumble, friend,
On these fine points, and that you'll reach the end.
By the Qur'an many were led astray;
That rope made some fall in the well. I say:
'Stubborn man, you can't claim the rope's to blame.
You lack the zeal to rise up to your aim.'

*The remainder of that story about the visitor to that guest-killing
mosque and his resolve and sincerity*

The mosque's ambitious guest who knew no fear 4215
Declared, 'Tonight I will sleep over here.
O mosque, if I find Kerbala in you
You'll be the Kaaba that fulfils me too.
Tonight permit me, chosen house, to play
With rope just as Hallaj did on that day.
And, though you counsel now in Gabriel's ways,
Abraham won't seek help from any blaze.*

Gabriel, begone, for once I'm lit I'm better
 Than any aloes wood or burning amber!
 Gabriel, though you protect and help me now, 4220
 Treating me like a brother, anyhow,
 Brother, I'm racing to the flames with savour,
 For I am not a soul who's known to waver.'
 Through fodder that base animal soul grew;
 It was a fire and burns like firewood too.
 It would have borne fruit if it didn't burn,
 Thriving and causing gain for men in turn.
 This fire's a scorching wind—it is one ray
 And not its essence burning in this way.
 Fire's essence is beyond this world we men know; 4225
 On earth there's just the ray and its own shadow.
 When the ray flickers it won't last the course
 And hurriedly returns back to its source.
 Your solid form is stable, but your shadow
 Will vary, short this evening, long tomorrow.
 One can't find permanence in just one ray—
 Reflections go back to their source one day.
 Sedition wants to speak, so press lips tight.
 Finish now! *God alone knows what is right.*

*Mention of the conception of evil thoughts by those who
lack understanding*

Before this story can reach its conclusion 4230
 An envious man's stench has made an intrusion,
 And, though this doesn't bother me one bit,
 Men's simple minds may be tripped up by it.
 Ghazni's Hakim explained the point so well
 By aiding veiled men with a parable:
 'If those who've lost their way, with their own eyes
 See naught in the Qur'an, that's no surprise.
 Since only heat is sensed by a blind eye
 From rays of the bright sun up in the sky.'
 An idiot, like a nasty, foul-mouthed crone, 4235
 Peeped out of the ass stable's door to moan:

He said, '*The Masnavi* is poor; it's shallow:

Only the Prophet's life and how to follow,
Naught on research in lofty mysteries

To which God's Friends' steeds race—there's none of these,
Nor stations from the first renunciation

Step by step to Him through annihilation,
No definition of the stages where

Mystics gain wings to fly with through the air.'

When God's Qur'an came down, each infidel

4240

Dismissed and criticized that text as well,
Saying, 'Legends and old wives' tales abound

In here, not what is lofty and profound.
Children can understand it and are moved;

It tells just what's approved or disapproved,
The Prophet Joseph and his curly hair,

Zulaikha's love for him and her despair*—
It is so obvious all read it with ease;

Nothing beyond one's mind: no mysteries.'

'If this seems simple now to you,' God said,

4245

'Produce one simple chapter—go ahead!

Tell the Jinn and the most skilled in mankind:

"Produce one verse of this 'too simple' kind!"'

Explanation of the saying of the Prophet: 'The Qur'an has an outer and an inner dimension, and its inner dimension has seven inner layers'

There is an outer form to the Qur'an,

Its inner is more powerful though, good man,
And inside that there's even a third layer—

All intellects would lose themselves in there.
The fourth layer inside none have seen at all

But God, Who's peerless and incomparable,
So don't look at its outer form that way—

4250

The Devil saw in Adam naught but clay.*

The outer form is just like Adam's person,

That's visible although his spirit's hidden:

During your life your uncle may stay near
 But still, to you, his inner state's not clear.

Explanation of how the retreat of Prophets and Friends of God to mountains and caves is not in order to hide themselves, nor out of fear of distraction by people, but instead in order to guide people and to urge them to sever links with the lower world as much as possible

'God's Friends are in the mountains,' people claim,
 'Because to hide from men's eyes is their aim.'

Next to such men they're higher than a mountain,

And they can step above the seventh heaven,

So why should they seek mountains now to hide, 4255

When they're beyond all mountains far and wide?

They have no need for mountains, nor to flee;

Colt-like the sky pursues them desperately,

And fails to see dust leave shoes of their souls—

That's why the sky is dressed for funerals.

Fairies, they claim, are hidden outwardly,

But Man is much more hidden, isn't he?

The wise think humans hidden from our eyes

Much more than fairies. Wise men recognize

All human beings as hidden, all of them— 4260

Imagine Adam's pure rank in that realm.

Comparison of the appearance of the Friends of God and their speech with the appearance of Moses' rod and Jesus' incantations

A human is like Jesus' best spell

And just like Moses' famed rod as well.

*Between two fingers** is the faithful's heart,

In God's hand, so it's just and fine. To start

It seems mere wood, but the whole world would fit

Inside its throat when opened just a bit.

Don't think of Jesus' spells as mere sounds—

Notice how death flees him. They know no bounds.

Don't notice just the sounds of his spells—see 4265

The corpses come to life miraculously.

Don't view the rod as something commonplace—
It combed the Nile's waves somehow from their place.
You noticed a black canopy, then you
Stepped closer and the army came to view.
When you are distant, dust is all you notice—
Approach to see a man there you can witness.
His dust restores sound vision to your eye
And he can uproot mountains that tower high.
Remember how, when Prophet Moses came,
Mount Sinai danced, as if with heart aflame.*

4270

*The exegesis of the Qur'anic verse 'O hills and birds,
repeat his praise!'**

Glory made David's face appear so bright;
Hills in devotion wept at such a sight.
The hills joined Prophet David when he'd sing,
All minstrels, drunk with deep love for their king;
When the command '*Repeat his praise!*' first came,
They all became one voice, their song the same.
God told him, 'Separation you have known,
Cut off from good friends for my sake alone,
A stranger with no close associate,
In whose heart flames of longing have been lit;
You seek companions, minstrels, singers too—
Eternal God presents these hills to you.'
He makes them singers who can sing so well;
He makes these hills fall drunken in a spell,
So you'll know God lets hills without mouths sing
And God's Friends too experience such a thing—
The particles of that pure-bodied man
Send melodies to his ears—yes, they can,
Though not heard by those in proximity—
He who has faith in him lives joyfully.
Inside his soul he finds inspired words too,
Although those sitting near him have no clue.
Questions and answers at a rapid pace
Enter your heart from realms beyond all space;

4275

4280

Though you can hear them, others cannot hear,
 Even if they should bring their own ears near.
 Deaf man, I know your ears do not perceive;
 You've seen the outward signs—why not believe?

*The answer to the one who criticized The Masnavi owing
 to deficient understanding*

Deriding dog! You're barking. Sense you lack! 4285
 You're mocking the Qur'an behind its back.
 This is no lion from which you can flee
 And save your faith from its ferocity.
 Till Resurrection the Qur'an declares:
 'You slaves of ignorance once had such airs,
 Reckoning me a fable none should heed,
 Sowing your unbelief and mocking's seed—
 What you were scoffing at you now can view:
 The transient, worthless fairy tale is you!
 I am God's speech, subsisting through His essence,* 4290
 The purest gem, food for the soul's transcendence.
 I am the sun's light shining on you now,
 Though I've not parted from it anyhow.'
 The Water of Life's spring is here, behold!
 I free the mystic lovers from death's hold.
 If your vile greed had not caused such a smell,
 God would have poured drops on your grave as well.
 No, I'll heed the advice from Sana'i—
 I won't let critics' comments bother me.

*Parable about the foal that refused to drink water because
 of the clamour by the grooms and trainers*

Sana'i told of a foal next to its mother 4295
 Which once were trying to drink up some water.
 Some men yelled at the horses constantly:
 'Hurry up! Drink your water rapidly!'
 When the foal heard the clamour, it instead
 Refused to drink by lifting up its head.

The mother asked, 'Foal, why is it you shun
Drinking the water now, before you're done?'
The foal replied, 'This group are yelling here
And all their clamour stiffens me with fear,
So my heart trembles and leaves my control— 4300
The yelling brings dread which consumes your foal.'
Its mother said, 'Since this world was created,
Such people have lived who've just irritated.'
Do your own work, good man! Each one you've feared
Will soon be witnessed tearing out his beard.
Time is short and the waters are in motion—
Hurry! Don't fall apart in separation.
The Water of Life's stream is one all know—
Draw some, so in you mystic plants will grow.
We drink Khezr's water from the streams, where you 4305
Find God's Friends' speech—all thirsty should come too.
If you can't see this water, like the blind
Dip your jug in the stream and never mind!
You've heard there's water in this riverbed
And blind men have to imitate instead.
Now take along your thought-filled water-skin,
Feel it gain weight as water's flowing in.
When yours is heavy, you'll learn true cognition,
And then your heart will shun blind imitation.
Although the blind man can't see water there, 4310
He can tell his jug's weight to be aware,
And say, 'Stream water's entered my jug now—
Before light, it's grown heavier somehow.
Since every breeze would sweep me off before,
But, now I'm heavier, they can't any more.'
Any old gust sweeps wretched men away,
For they've no faculties that we can weigh:
The wicked man's an anchorless ship, so
He has no guard against the winds that blow.
Intellect's anchor gives security 4315
For wise men—beg for one now desperately,
Since he's grabbed wisdom's graces from the treasury
Of pearls inside the Ocean of God's bounty.

Such grace fills hearts with virtues that then fly
 From the heart to illuminate the eye:
 The heart's light settles in the eye, which turns
 To heart itself, then by itself discerns.
 Hearts come in contact with true wisdom's rays,
 And give a share to eyes through hidden ways.
 Regard the blessed water poured from heaven, 4320
 Their inspiration and true exposition.
 Let's drink stream water like the foal, and then
 Disregard bad suggestions from those men.
 If you're a follower of the Prophets, then
 Take this path and ignore those scolding men.
 Why should the lords who have completed it
 Listen to barking from mere dogs one bit?

*Remainder of the mention of that visitor at the mosque that
 killed its guests*

Divulge now what appeared in that mosque to
 That lion-heart gambler! What then did he do?
 He slept there, though that's just how it would seem, 4325
 For how can drowned men sleep in a mere stream?
 Immersed in whirlpools of their grief, such lovers
 Sleep lightly, bird-like, underneath the covers.
 A very frightening voice at midnight said:
 'I'm coming for you! All you'll gain is dread!'
 Five times this powerful voice rose up and tore
 His heart apart each time he heard it roar.

*Exegesis of the verse 'And use your horses and footsoldiers
 in an assault against them!'**

Whenever you strive in religion's way
 The Devil shouts at you within, to say:
 'Don't take that path! Think, stray one, or you'll be 4330
 A captive soon to pain and poverty.
 Cut off from friends, you'll have no food and you
 Will be debased, humiliated too.'

The Devil's shouts will fill you with such terror
That you'll flee certainty and head to error,
Saying: 'Tomorrow or next year I will
Follow religion's path; there is time still.'
You will see death again, which everywhere
Is killing friends, whose cries now fill the air.
You'll then turn to religion's path again 4335
From mortal fear and be a man, so then
You'll put on knowledge and true wisdom's armour,
Vowing: 'I won't retreat again in horror.'
That voice will try again its trickery:
'Be scared! Give up the sword of poverty!'
You'll flee enlightenment's straight path once more,
Shedding knowledge's armour as before.
For years you'll be his slave due to one shout
And settle in a place that's dark throughout.
Men are enslaved through fear of such a yell 4340
From that cursed Devil who grabs throats as well,
To make their souls lose hope of light, as slaves
To his dark ways, like infidels in graves.
If that cursed one's yell spreads such terror, then
Imagine what God's yell will spread to men.
The partridge dreads the falcon, but the fly
Does not feel dread—here is the reason why:
The falcon doesn't hunt them: realize
That only spiders ever hunt for flies.
The spiderish Devil lords it over you, 4345
Not over partridges. This is not new.
The Devil's yell acts as the damned men's herder,
That of the Great King is His Friends' protector.
Since these two are as different as can be;
None of the sweet sea joins the salty sea.*

The talismanic roar reaches the guest in the mosque at midnight

Heed now the tale about that roar that proved
Too weak for that man, as he wasn't moved.

'Why should I fear the drums of Eid?' he said,
 'Let all those beaten drums feel fear instead!'

Lacking hearts, empty drums, your only share 4350
 Of spirit's Eid is being struck—beware!
 Resurrection's Eid, infidels the drums:
 We laugh and celebrate the day Eid comes.
 Hear how he cooked good fortune's broth: he made
 It in a pot while drums were being played.
 That man with vision heard the drum and said:
 'Why should Eid's drum fill up my heart with dread?
 Don't tremble, heart, for souls that are too prone
 To doubting die from that, and them alone.
 The time has come for me to act like Ali: 4355
 To seize the kingdom and give up my body.'
 He leapt up, shouting, 'Prince of this loud drum,
 I'm ready; if you are a real man, come!'

At his voice that drum's talisman broke, while
 Nuggets of gold rained down, pile after pile.
 So much gold rained down that he was left shocked
 And feared the doorway even might get blocked.
 Then that strong lion rose up and went on
 Dragging the gold all out until the dawn.
 He buried one huge pile and then went back 4360
 To get some more with a huge, empty sack.
 That one who'd gambled his own life was fearless,
 Piling treasures, leaving fear for retreaters.
 The thought that it's gold of the earthly kind
 Comes to each blind gold-worshipper's stray mind:
 Children break earthenware and then they name
 It 'gold' and pocket it in their own game;
 During that game, if you say 'gold' you'll find
 Only this unreal 'gold' comes to their mind.
 Real gold displays God's hallmark, so it never 4365
 Loses its value, and it lasts for ever.
 From that gold this world's gold acquired its lustre,
 Brilliance, splendour, and its fine hue and colour.
 That gold makes hearts rich and it can outshine
 The moon at its most radiant—it's divine.

He was the moth while that mosque was his candle;
With his own self this moth desired to gamble.
His wings were singed, but he liked this the best
Because, from diving in, he'd be so blest;
That fortunate man was just like Moses, who 4370
Saw the bush burn, then heard words that were true.
Since so much grace rained down, what in his sight
Had seemed to be fire was in fact pure light.
You see a Friend of God from the outside
And think he has a human's fire inside,
Because you have that and it shapes your vision;
Our low realm hosts the fire of vain opinion.
He's Moses' bush and is filled with light—
Call him 'light'. Don't say 'fire'. Get this fact right!
Severance from here seemed fire to your own eyes, 4375
But turned out to be light to your surprise.
Faith's candle always rises just the same;
It doesn't melt like those that have a flame
And seem like light but burn those who come near—
This looks like fire, but roses greet you here.
That one seems friendly, but burns body parts;
This one at union gives pure light to hearts.
The flame of pure light's form to those who're present
Is light, but it seems fire to those who're distant.

The meeting of that lover with the Sadr-e Jahan

That brave Bukharan threw himself in too; 4380
His deep love meant the pains he felt were few.
His burning sigh rose to the heavens and
Softened the *sadr's* heart, although unplanned.
The *sadr* said to himself at the next dawn:
'How is our wandering friend, Pure, Holy One?
We saw him sinning, but he didn't know
About the mercy we like to bestow.
The sinner's conscience fears us, but it's clear
A hundred hopes are found too in his fear.

I frighten impudent men who have strayed, 4385
 But how can I scare one who's not afraid?
 The flame is for the cold pan, not the other
 One which is so hot that it's boiling over.
 With knowledge I scare those who don't fear me,
 While calming those who do with clemency.
 I'm one who stitches patches where they fit;
 I serve men drinks that are appropriate.'
 A human's heart is like the tree's roots, friend:
 Leaves grow from solid branches in the end;
 Leaves grow to match the hidden roots of trees, 4390
 And souls and minds act just the same as these.
 Loyalty's trees grow wings that reach on high:
*Its root is firm, its branches in the sky.**
 Wings that can take you up to heaven grew
 From love, so love can fill the *sadr's* heart too.
 Forgiveness's wave surged inside his heart;
 A window joins each heart that is apart.
 Since there's a window that links hearts together,
 They aren't, like bodies, separate from each other.
 Though two parts of a lamp aren't joined, you've seen 4395
 How still their light will mix there in between.

There is no lover seeking union who
 Is not being sought by his beloved too.
 The lover's love will waste away his body,
 But the Beloved's love makes Him so lovely.
 When love for Him makes lightning enter in,
 It's clear that heart contains His love within.
 When love for truth is doubled in there too,
 You'll know without doubt God has love for you:
 One hand can't make a clapping sound, can it? 4400
 It needs another hand that it can hit.
 The thirsty man yearns, 'Wholesome water, help me!'
 The same time water yearns, 'Those thirsty, drink me!'
 Thirst in our souls is water's strong attraction;
 As we belong to it, it's our possession:

God's wisdom has in destiny and fate
Made us each other's lover and true mate.
And all the world's parts due to destiny
Are paired with mates whom they love equally.
Each particle in this world seeks its partner 4405
Exactly the same way as straw and amber.
The heavens tell the ground, 'Greetings to you!
I can attract you just as magnets do.'
The earth is female, heavens male—the latter
Casts down things which the former then will nurture.
When earth lacks heat, they send some down below;
When it lacks moisture, this too they'll bestow.
The zodiac's earth signs help all dry ground,
While water signs spread moisture all around.
The air signs will dispatch some clouds earth's way, 4410
So they can drag unhealthy fumes away.
The fire signs heat the sun up to the limit,
The way one makes red hot a cooking skillet.
Time makes the heavens turn round dizzily
Like men who for their wives' sake busily
Seek wages, while the greatest housewife's earth,
For it will nurture after it gives birth.
Heavens and earth are both intelligent:
They act like those who are—that's what I meant.
And if they aren't in truth a pair of lovers, 4415
Why do they move in harmony like partners?
Without the earth how could a flower grow?
What then would heat and water raise below?
The female is inclined towards the male,
So each one's work is finished without fail.
God put this inclination deep inside,
So, through this union, our world would abide.
He put it in each particle pair too,
So something's born from union of the two:
Night is thus in embrace with day—they're different 4420
In looks, but really they're in full agreement.
Night and day look like opposites and foes,
But they attest to one truth, and it shows.

Just like itself each one desires the other
 In order to make its own actions better.
 Men would lack God's infusions without night,
 So what could they accomplish when it's light?

*How each element attracts its own kind that has been trapped
 in human form by a different element*

Clay tells the body's clay, 'Return and be
 Quit of the soul. Just like dust, rush to me!
 You're my kind, so to be with me is better— 4425
 It's best to flee that body and its moisture.'
 'Yes, but my feet are bound,' says body's clay.
 'I'm sick though of being kept apart this way.'
 The waters seek the body's moisture too:
 'Come back from exile that you've been put through!'
 The ether calls the body's heat, 'You are
 Of fire—come back to your source from afar!'
 Seventy-two pains keep the body full
 Of pain, due to the elements' strong pull.
 Shattering the body is the ailment's aim, 4430
 So elements can leave the way they came.
 The elements are bound birds—injury,
 Disease, and death are what can set them free,
 Untying their feet from each other, so
 Each element's bird will be free to go.
 These sources' and derivatives' attractions
 Each moment gives our bodies new afflictions,
 To tear apart compounded forms by force,
 So each part's bird can fly back to its source.
 What stops this quickly happening is God's power, 4435
 Which keeps them joined until the Final Hour.
 God says, 'It's not time yet, you parts, so wait!
 It's pointless to fly off before your fate.'
 Since every part seeks union, how much more
 The exiled soul seeks what it had before.

*How the soul is attracted, too, to the world of spirits and appeals for
its own residence there, and how it is severed from body parts that
are a fetter on the spiritual falcon*

‘O my base bodily parts,’ the soul will moan,
 ‘Exile pains me—I should be near the Throne.’
 Body loves fields and water as its realm,
 Because the body’s origin’s from them;
 Soul loves life and the Living One no less— 4440
 Its origin’s That Soul in Placelessness.
 Soul heads to wisdom, body heads to orchards
 And pleasure gardens, not to mention vineyards.
 The soul inclines towards ascent and honour,
 The body, acquisition and mere fodder.
 That honour’s love and passion also leans
 To it—that’s what ‘*He loves and they love*’* means.
 The upshot’s that, if one seeks something out,
 Its soul desires one also without doubt.
 If I try to explain, there’d be no end— 4445
 The *Masnavi* would stretch too long, my friend!
 Man, animal, plant, and inanimates
 Are loved and love their lovers, as is fit;
 The latter join their objects of desire
 Which have attracted them and pull them higher.
 The lovers’ love makes them thin like a hair,
 While the beloved’s makes them plump and fair,
 Giving their cheeks more colour in this way,
 While that of lovers makes them burn away.
 Amber’s a lover that appears desireless; 4450
 Straw makes the journey to it and is tireless.
 Leave this aside! Love for that thirsty one
 Shone in the breast of the Sadr-e Jahan:
 Smoke from his love and fire-temple of passion
 Entered this master and turned to compassion,
 But, due to his own pride and dignity,
 He was ashamed to seek him openly.

His mercy yearned for that one who was helpless,
 But his nobility obstructed kindness.

The intellect is stunned and left to wonder:

4455

Did this one draw that one first or the other?

Don't be presumptuous! It's beyond you—close

Your lips, *What's hidden no one but God knows.*

I'll bury this talk now for ever more,

For the Attractor pulls—can I add more?

Who is now drawing you close, anxious one?

He Who won't let you now tell anyone.

For your trip you make countless preparations,

Then He draws you instead to new locations,

Because in all directions He can turn

4460

The bridle, so the untrained horse might learn
 About its rider—even if he's hidden;

It moves well when it knows that it's being ridden.

He made you fix your heart on things, just to

Deny you them and break your heart in two.

When He broke your first thought's wing, in that instance

How could you doubt that Wing-breaker's existence?

When His decree snapped your control's cord too,

How could That One's ordainment not be true?

The ruining of resolutions is in order to inform Man that He is the Ruler and Conqueror, and that His occasional non-annulment of Man's resolution and His putting it into effect is in order that desire may lead him to make a resolution, so that next time he can ruin it, and thus warnings can be repeated

Sometimes things that you have resolved and willed

4465

Just as you want them all become fulfilled.

This is to make your heart attempt once more,

So He can make that fail unlike before,

For if he always should deny you, then

Your heart would lose hope and not try again;

And, lacking hope's seed, how would it then see

Its fruitlessness and that it's His decree—

Through being unsuccessful like this, lovers
Become acquainted with their lords and masters.
Your unfulfilment is the guide you need: 4470
*Paradise is surrounded,** so take heed!
Since all your wishes' legs get broken, there
Must be winners with whom you will compare:
Sincere ones have been broken, but you'll find
Breaking of lovers is a different kind.
The learned ones are broken by compulsion,
But lovers seek themselves their own destruction.
To Him the scholars are just slaves who're bound,
Lovers the sweetest candy that is found.
'*Against your will come!*' speaks to just the former. 4475
'*Come willingly!*'* gives lover's hearts spring's ardour.

*How the Prophet looked at captives and smiled, saying:
'I marvel at people who have to be dragged to paradise with
chains and shackles!'*

The Prophet saw a group of captives being
Taken somewhere while all of them were screaming.
That lion who perceived their situation
Saw them glance furtively in his direction,
Each angry with him to such an extent
They'd gnash their teeth and bite as they would vent.
Despite being angry they did not dare say
A word, since they were bound in chains that day.
Then their custodians brought these captives down 4480
With force from infidel realms to their town.
'He won't accept a ransom,' they'd protest,
'And none will intercede at our behest.
Thy call him "Mercy to the World", yet he
Chops off the necks of people mercilessly.'
They went along with thousands of objections,
Railing beneath their breath at this king's actions:
'We've solved so many problems on our own,
But not this one—his heart's as hard as stone.

We're thousands of brave men and yet we dread 4485
 These few weak, naked men who look half-dead—
 Why are we helpless? Due to straying far
 Or magic, or an inauspicious star?
 His fortune tore up ours, and then his throne
 Overturned our throne; Now we're so alone.
 If he prevailed through sorcery, then why
 Did it not work when we gave it a try?

Exegesis of the Qur'anic verse 'If you ask for a decision, the decision has come. O railers, you were saying, "Give the decision and victory to us or Mohammad whoever is correct.'" You were saying that in order that it might be thought that you were seeking the truth without personal interest; now that we have given Mohammad the victory, you can see who is correct*

'We'd told God and the idols, "Tear us up
 If we are not correct, as we'll give up.
 Grant victory to him or us, the side 4490
 Who's in the right and who has never lied."
 We said the prayer and bowed our heads to Lat
 And fellow idols Ozza and Manat,*
 And said, "If he's correct, then make it clear,
 And if not make him subject to us here."
 When we saw clearly that he'd been victorious,
 That he's the light while we are drowned in darkness,
 We heard this: "What you asked for all day long
 Has been made manifest—you're in the wrong."
 They hid the truth then from themselves again, 4495
 And banished that thought's memory from the brain,
 Saying: 'It was our own unlucky plight
 That made our hearts believe that he was right.
 So what if he prevails now and again:
 Success eventually comes to all men,
 And it has made us fortunate previously,
 When over him we'd tasted victory.
 When we defeated him a while ago
 It wasn't like this: now we're being dragged low.'

This is because good fortune secretly
Gave him much joy from losing—can't you see
He didn't look at all like one just vanquished?
No stress or misery could be distinguished.
Defeat is not a truth-revealing sign,
But only the believers still feel fine:
If you crush musk or ambergris, you'll send
Sweet perfume through the whole world, end to end,
But if you crush a donkey's turd, you'll fill
Houses with its vile stench and make men ill.
He came from Hodaybiyya, and all the same
Drums rolled '*We gave you victory!*' to his name.*

*The secret reason why God called the Prophet's return unfulfilled from Hodaybiyya a 'victory', saying: 'We have opened to you a victory.*In form it was being locked in defeat, but in reality it was an opening up to victory, just as crushing musk appears to be a defeat, but is in fact causing its musky scent to emerge and perfecting its virtues*

Good fortune told him, 'Go forth and do not
Be saddened. We withheld what you had sought,
For, through abasement, you'll earn victory—
That fort and town will be your property.
Remember well when you retreat from here
What happened with Qurayza and Nadir: *
The forts at those two towns fell to your hands
And you gained booty from their conquered lands.
Look at this group! If this is not the case
Why do they smile despite the grief they face?
They eat debasement's poison up as though
It's sweet: like camels they chew thorns of woe.
That's all for grief's sake and not for relief:
Defeat's a ladder up in their belief.
They're happy at the bottom of the pit
And dread the crown and thrones on which kings sit.
With the Beloved there, that place's worth
Transcends the sky and can't be under earth.

Exegesis of the saying of Mohammad: 'Don't say I am superior to Noah!'

Mohammad once said, 'Don't claim my ascension 4515

Transcends how Jonah once rose up to heaven:

My route was up, while his was down below,

Nearness to God is not geographical though—

It doesn't mean going up or down from here,

But fleeing from existence. Is that clear?'

Non-being has no link to trivial factors

Like near or far, early or late—none matters.

God's workshop's in Non-being, but when you

Are dazzled still by being, you have no clue.

In short, defeat for them does not resemble 4520

Our own defeat, not even just a little.

They are as glad with losses and demotions

As we are with good fortune and promotions.

He's happy with what Non-being should provide;

Poverty and abasement give him pride.

One of the captives said, 'If he's that way,

Why did he laugh when we were bound today?

If he has changed and does not feel delight

At his own freedom and our sorry plight,

Why does he feel joy when his enemy 4525

Becomes subdued, and bask in victory?

His soul felt joy because he gained with ease

God's aid in bringing us all to our knees,

And that's how we know he's not liberated

And that mere worldly gains leave him elated.

If not, why did he laugh? Holy men should

Be kind towards bad men as well as good.'

Under their breath these captives muttered this

Among themselves as their analysis,

Adding, 'Make sure the guard won't overhear 4530

And take what we say to his ruler's ear!'

*The Prophet becomes aware of their criticizing him
for Schadenfreude*

Although the guard did not hear what they said,
Through God directly it reached him instead:
To Joseph's keeper his shirt gave no clue,
But Jacob smelt it from afar and knew;*
Even if they reach heaven sneakily,
Those devils wouldn't hear Truth's mystery.
Mohammad was reclining on the ground
And sleeping when the secret circled round.
The one whose share it is will eat the halva, 4535
Not the one who can boast the longest finger.
A shooting star became a guard and said
To those men, 'Learn from Ahmad truth instead
Of stealing.' You who stare at shops from dawn,
Go to the mosque for sustenance you're set on!
The Prophet learned of their talk, then he said:
'My smiles were not from enmity. They're dead
And have begun already to decay—
Killing a corpse is not the brave man's way.
In truth, who are they when compared with me— 4540
I who can make the moon split suddenly.*
When you were free and had a rank so high,
You were then chained just as now to my eye:
You who love wealth and what belongs to you,
You're vain and worthless in a wise man's view.
Your bodies fell down from the roof like plates;
My eyes see all things and their future fates.
In the unripe grape I see wine already;
In nothingness I see a thing so clearly—
I see a hidden world that lies within; 4545
Adam and Eve's time there's yet to begin.
I'd seen you at Alast too, you should know—
Then you were all felled, tied up, and brought low.
That knowledge did not need to be updated
After the pillarless heavens were created.

I saw you falling upside down before
 I grew from clay and water, and what's more
 I've seen naught new to bring me happiness.
 I saw this when you once were prosperous
 And bound by hidden wrath which was so great— 4550
 Candy containing poison you then ate.
 If one sees poison eaten by those men
 One counts as foes, who would feel jealous then?
 You used to eat that poison with such glee
 When death had blocked your ears up secretly.
 I didn't wage war just for conquest, and
 I don't seek the whole world within my hand,
 For this world is a corpse that is so worthless—
 How should I covet such a rotten carcass?
 I'm not a dog that pulls a corpse's hair— 4555
 I'm Jesus who revives it. Now compare!
 I broke through battle ranks with the intention
 Of rescuing you from complete destruction,
 But I do not slit men's throats needlessly,
 Hoping that power and glory come to me—
 I will slit some throats, if that is the way
 To save a whole world as the price to pay,
 For you, in ignorance, like moths, will make
 Throwing yourselves at flames the path to take—
 With my own hands I stop you falling in 4560
 The fire like drunkards with your mind in spin.
 What you took for your victories were the seed
 Of your misfortune, but you paid no heed.
 You called each other earnestly, then rode
 Straight to the dragon's mouth—that's what you sowed.
 You vanquished men, but at the same time you
 Were conquered by time's fearless lion too.'

*Explanation of how the tyrant is overwhelmed while overpowering
and is made a captive when he gains victory*

A thief held down a merchant and stole gold;
 A magistrate saw all of this unfold.

If he instead had fled the merchant, then 4565
 The magistrate could not have sent his men.
His overpowering caused him loss instead
 Because this act robbed him of his own head;
It turned into his snare—the magistrate
 Had time to come and then retaliate.
You who have conquered many people and
 Are steeped in conquest all across the land,
God made your victims lose to you, so He
 Could draw you into His net gradually.
Beware, draw rein! Don't chase that victim or 4570
 You will be stabbed soon in a greater war.
Once he has drawn you like this to the snare,
 You'll see men surge at you from everywhere.
Intellects can't rejoice in victory
 When that should lead to sheer depravity.
Wisdom's sharp-sighted and clairvoyant too,
 For God's applied His kohl for wisdom's view.
The Prophet said, 'People of paradise
 Are poor debaters, for this is the price
For their self-criticism and sheer firmness; 4575
 It's not deficiency or inner weakness.'
While giving deference they would listen to
 '*If there were no believers*'* though none knew.
From striking infidels they were held back
 So all believers stayed free from attack:
Read Hodaybiyya's pact, and understand
 From that what's meant by '*He restrained your hands*.'*
He saw himself, though he'd gained victory,
 As overpowered by God's majesty:
'I am not laughing at your chains,' he said, 4580
 'Or due to seizing you last night. Instead
I laugh because I now must force you to
 Come to the garden with chains tied on you.'
How strange that we must drag you now with chains
 From hell-fire to such lovely, verdant plains.
I'm dragging you with heavy chains from hell
 To lasting paradise, but you rebel.'

God drags each man who follows what He says
 Up to His presence bound in similar ways.
 All *travel this path bound in chains of fear* 4585
And trial apart from God's Friends who live near;
 By force the rest are dragged in that direction,
 With those who've gained the secrets the exception.
 Strive hard so that your light will shine bright too
 And service will seem easy then to do.
 You drag a child to school against his will,
 For he can't tell the benefits there still;
 The child will run there once he is aware,
 His soul smile at the thought of going there.
 The child who still resents attending it 4590
 Has failed to see tuition's benefit,
 But when he gains a coin that he can keep,
 Just like a thief he'll even give up sleep.
 Wait till you see obedience's good wages—
 You'll envy those who've been that way for ages.
 'Against your will come!' rallies imitators,
 'Come willingly!'^{*} invites God's instigators.
 The former love God for another factor,
 But God's the only motive for the latter:
 The former love the nurse for milk she gives, 4595
 The latter's love for her makes their hearts live.
 The former only love her milk, for they
 Can't see her beauty—milk gets in the way.
 The latter love the nurse herself, without
 Ulterior motives—their love's pure throughout.
 Those who love God with hope and fear just read
 The notebook of religious men's *taglid*,^{*}
 While those who love for God's sake stand apart—
 Self-interest can't fit into such a heart;
 Such men seek God no matter the condition 4600
 They're in—they're drawn to God by His attraction.
 Whether one loves God for some other ends,
Partaking in the goodness that He sends,
 Or for His own sake in pure isolation,
Fearing only the trial of separation,

You'll find that both of these two searches starts
From up beyond, since He traps all men's hearts.

*The beloved's attraction of the lover works in such a way that
the lover neither knows it nor hopes for it, nor has the occurrence
in his mind of it, nor has a trace of that attraction appear inside,
except the fear that is mixed with despair and combined with
the continuation of seeking*

We've realized now that if the attraction
By his beloved *sadr* had not been hidden,
The lover wouldn't have been dying to 4605
Run back to the sole home he really knew.
While the beloved's loves are under cover,
Trumpets and drums announce those of the lover.
There is a story that can illustrate
This point, but the Bukharan cannot wait—
He's longing now to see with his own eyes
His own beloved's face before he dies,
To flee death and in this way be delivered:
Water of Life is seeing one's beloved.
If seeing someone won't cause death to flee, 4610
That's not your real beloved obviously.
O ardent drunkard, this is a rare matter—
If death comes during it, then it tastes better;
It is the proof of true faith that death should
Be made by it to taste and feel so good—
If your faith isn't like this, soul, then it
Still needs work to become immaculate.
Whoever loves his own death just for you
Is your beloved, since his heart is true.
It isn't death when he feels no aversion; 4615
It looks like death, but really is migration.
When there is no aversion, death must be
Bringing gain—it is blocked then fittingly.
God is the true beloved and those few
To whom God said, 'You're mine and I'm for you.'

Listen, the lover's reaching near: love tied
 Him up in a *palm-fibre cord** inside.
 On seeing that *sadr's* form which won his love,
 His soul flew from his body high above;
 His body fell down like dry wood below, 4620
 Felt cold to touch from his head to his toe;
 No matter how much incense and rose water
 They used, he didn't stir or even mutter.
 Once the king saw his saffron-coloured face,
 He stopped, dismounted, and approached his place,
 Then said, 'Lovers seek their beloved keenly,
 And when he comes they disappear completely.'
 You are God's lover; He is the One Who
 By His arrival here effaces you.
 His gaze does this to hundreds of your kind; 4625
 Maybe it's such effacement you've in mind?
 You are the shade that loves the sun, despite
 The fact that you're effaced by that sun's light.

*The flea appeals for justice against the wind in the presence
of Solomon*

A flea came from the garden's grassy field
 To seek out Solomon and then appealed:
 'Solomon, justice is dealt out by you
 To demons, humans, and the fairies too;
 Birds and fish feel protected by your justice—
 Has anyone escaped your grace's notice?
 Grant justice to us, for we are downtrodden 4630
 Without shares in the orchard or rose garden.
 You solve the problems of all who are feeble
 And "flea" is used for them by many people.
 We're known for weakness and being frail of wing;
 You're known for kindness and for nurturing.
 The top degree of power is your high station;
 We've reached the peak of lack and destitution.
 Grant justice and relieve us of this grief—
 Your hand is as God's hand in our belief.'

Solomon said, 'Seeker of justice, say
Some more about the justice sought today. 4635
Who is the tyrant? Who is so conceited
That he's made you feel trapped and badly treated?
I'm curious where the tyrant of our age
Can be if he's not chained or in a cage?
When we were born, oppressors died, so who
In our great age is being cruel to you?
When light dawned, it removed all trace of darkness;
Darkness is cruelty's origin and buttress.
Some demons take on much activity 4640
While other ones are chained restrictively.
The Devil is the source of cruelty here,
So while he's chained how can that still appear?
"Be! And it was"* bestowed on us dominion,
So people wouldn't need to cry to heaven,
So smoke would not rise there from people's sighs,
So none would bother stars in heaven's skies,
So that the orphan's wails would not alarm
The Throne and shake it, nor souls suffer harm.
Inside our kingdoms we've established laws 4645
So to cry out "O Lord!" there'd be no cause.
Victim, don't look up to the heavens when
A heavenly king is here among the men.'
The flea said, 'I complain of the wind's hand,
Which it used to mistreat us. In this land
We all are suffering inside from its cruelty
With closed lips, though we feel such pain acutely.'

*Solomon commands the plaintiff flea to bring its adversary
to court*

Solomon said, 'Sweet-voiced flea, understand
You must hear with your soul the Lord's command:
God has told me, "Judge, you must take great care 4650
Not to hear one side when their foe's not there—
Until both sides of the dispute appear
To judges still the truth remains unclear.

Though plaintiffs raise a hundred cries, still bide
 Your time till you have heard the other side."
 I dare not disobey the Lord's command—
 Bring your adversary here! Understand?
 The flea said, 'What you say is very true
 And my adversary is here with you.'
 Solomon shouted, 'East wind, do you hear 4655
 The flea's complaint about your rage? Come here
 To see the plaintiff face to face—that moment
 You can give your response to your opponent.'
 On hearing this, the wind rushed straight away
 And that flea tried to fly the other way.
 Then Solomon said, 'Flea, now where are you?
 Stay here, so I may judge between you two.'
 'O king, its being here will leave me dead.
 Its smoke has blackened my whole day,' it said.
 'When it arrives I've no security; 4660
 It squeezes out all of the breath in me.'

In the same way the seeker of God's court,
 Once God arrives, becomes reduced to naught.
 Although that union's an abiding station,
 It first appears through self-annihilation.
 When shadows seek the light, they disappear
 As soon as that sought-out light should appear;
 Once the head's given up, mind has no place,
 For *everything will perish but His face*.
 Before His face, both Being and Non-being die; 4665
 Being in Non-being! This fact can stupefy;
 Inside this presence minds leave your control—
 The pen breaks when it nears this lofty goal.

*The beloved caresses the stupefied lover, so he returns
 to consciousness*

The *sadr* then drew him out at gentle pace
 From his unconscious state with generous grace.

‘O beggar!’ he screamed in his ear, ‘I’ve brought
Some gold to throw—you can keep what you’ve caught.
Your soul would tremble when in separation—
How come it fled once I brought it protection?
In exile from me you’ve experienced all
Nature of things, but wake up now I call!’

4670

A hen brings home a camel stupidly
As guest to show its hospitality,
But once the camel takes one step within
The hen-house falls down and its roof caves in.
The hen-house is our intellect and sense;
God’s camel’s sought by sound intelligence,
And when that camel enters into clay
That clay can’t stay; the soul too fades away.
Man has turned greedy. Once pre-eminent,
Seeking excess he’s cruel and ignorant.
He’s ignorant while on an arduous chase
Like hares that drag lions—they don’t know their place:
How would it drag a lion otherwise
If it could see the lion’s actual size?
Man is unjust as well to his soul—witness
Injustice that surpasses all injustice.
His ignorance can teach all of the sciences
And his injustice guides all kinds of justice.
The *sadr*, taking his hand, said, ‘This man’s death
Requires me to bestow life through my breath.
When this corpse is brought back to life through me,
It will be my own soul that faces me.
I will be honouring him then with this soul
That I’ll give, which will witness my bestowal.
Outsiders can’t see the Beloved’s face;
That’s for those who come from no other place.
I’ll breathe on him like butchers—in my mind
I’ll hope his marrow leaves his skin behind.
O soul that has fled agony, don’t fear!
We’ve opened up our union’s door—come here!

4675
4680
4685

O you whose selflessness and drunkenness
 And being constantly emerge from us,
 Without lips I'll convey to you today
 Ancient mysteries—listen to what I say!
 Beware that this breath makes lips run away,
 So banks of hidden streams tell it their way.
 Open up now, pure earlessness's ear!
 "God does what He should will"* you'll clearly hear.'

This invitation to a union then

4690

Induced his corpse to slowly stir again.
 He isn't less than soil that you have seen
 Rising due to the breeze, and turning green,
 Nor semen, through which due to God's Speech one
 Brings forth a Joseph radiant as the sun,
 Nor wind, which, when God's word '*Be!*'* has been heard,
 Brings forth a peacock or a sweet-voiced bird;
 He's not less than that rocky mountain either
 That bore a camel that then bore another.*

Leave this behind! Did not what's non-existent

4695

Bring forth a whole world and more every instant.
 The man sprang up, trembled, then happily
 Whirled round and fell prostrate for all to see.

*The unconscious lover comes to his wits again and starts to praise
 and give thanks to the beloved*

He said, 'Phoenix of God, each soul will turn
 Around you—thanks for making a return
 From Qaf.* Esrafil of love's resurrection,
 You who are love's love and love's yearning passion!

As the first gift of honour you give me,
 Please bring your ear to hear what none can see.

Although, through purity, you know my state,
 My nurturer, please hear what I relate!

4700

Unique *sadr*, countless times I fell aswoon,
 Yearning for your ear—it can't come too soon.

That hearing of yours with your understanding
 And smiles from your lips which are soul-expanding,

That bearing of my big and small affairs
As well as my soul's flirting with such airs—
My false coins by which you weren't taken in,
Yet you accepted them as genuine:
You saw my haughty mischief, but could spare 4705
Clemency next to which ours can't compare.
When I had strayed far from the net you cast
I lost it all from first until the last.
The next thing, loving *sadr*, which you must hear
Is how I searched because you have no peer.
Thirdly, since leaving you, it feels like I
Have been a Trinitarian. Who knows why?
Fourth, since my field has been burned, though I strive
I cannot tell apart still four from five.
Wherever you find blood drops, realize 4710
By looking closely that they're from my eyes.
My speech is thunder, and its booming sound
Wants all the clouds to rain down on the ground.
Speaking or weeping—I'm torn by these two:
Should I now speak or weep? Which should I do?
If I speak now, I can't keep weeping too;
If I don't speak then how can I praise you?
My eyes weep blood from my heart, king—behold
What has poured out of my eyes; don't be cold.'

He said this then began to weep with dread, 4715
While all and sundry wept at what he'd said.
His heart let out such screams that at their sound
The People of Bukhara gathered round.
As he spoke, wept, and laughed there, mesmerized,
All of those watching him felt paralysed:
The whole town now shed tears in the same way,
As if assembled there for Judgment Day.
The sky that moment told the earth, 'If you
Have not seen Resurrection, there's a view.'
'What love, what stupor!' intellect then said, 4720
'Is union stranger or being far instead?'

The heavens read out words for Judgment Day,
 Then tore their clothes up to the Milky Way.
 Love is a stranger to both worlds; in it
 Are diverse madnesses and more can fit.
 It's hidden with a dazed manifestation;
 The King of Souls seeks it in separation.
 Beyond all of the sects one finds love's school;
 It sees no worth in thrones of men who rule.
 During *sama** love's minstrel's new refrain 4725
 Is 'Slavery chains; lordship gives your head pain.'
 What is our love then for Non-being's sea,
 When reason's foot breaks in proximity?
 Slavery and lordship are both known—behind
 These two veils love is what you're going to find.
 If only Being had a tongue, it then
 Could lift the veil that hangs before all men.
 Breath of existence, anything you tell
 Places another veil in front. Heed well!
 Your speaking is itself perception's bane: 4730
 Washing blood up with more blood is in vain.
 Since I'm familiar with the drunkard's way,
 I murmur in this cage both night and day.
 You're drunken, witless, with a frenzied head—
 Did you get out the wrong side of the bed?
 Take heed, don't breathe a single word—beware!
 Catch up with one who's close enough to share.
 You are a drunken lover with loose lips—
 By God, you're near the brink—avoid more slips!
 My tongue tells of his mystery and his flirting, 4735
 Then heaven recites: '*You who are good at hiding!*'

How can one hide it? Flames are spreading here;
 The more you try, the more he will appear.
 If I conceal his secrets, then he'll raise
 His head flag-like—'I am right here,' he says.
 Try as I might, he grabs me by the ear,
 Saying, 'Fool, you can't make him disappear!'

‘Begone, you have boiled over!’ I protest,
 ‘You’re like the soul: hidden yet manifest.’
He says, ‘My body’s trapped inside the vat
 Like at wine banquets—I rejoice at that.’ 4740
I answer, ‘Go away before you’re pawned
 And drunkenness’s bane has finally dawned.’
He says, ‘With my fine wine-cup I’ll rest there
 Throughout the day until the evening prayer.
When evening should attempt to steal my cup,
 I’ll say, “Return it, for my time’s not up.”’
The Arabs have named wine ‘continual’*
 Because the drinker never feels he’s full.
Love boils the wine of realization, so 4745
 Love is God’s *sāqi* for His Friends below.
When you seek properly, then wine transforms
 To your souls’ water in your jar-like forms.
When He increases wine of guidance, that
 Extra force makes it burst right through the vat;
Water becomes the *sāqi*, and it too
 Becomes so drunk! *God knows best what is true.*
The *sāqi*’s glow shines on the wine’s must and
 That must boils, starts to dance and then expand.
Ask that bewildered one, ‘Where have you seen 4750
 Wine must behaving as this must has been?’
Those in the know need not think hard then later
 Explain each stirred thing needs an agitator.

*Story about being in love, lengthy separation,
and substantial trial*

A young man was love-crazed due to a woman,
 But stayed deprived of the good fate of union;
Love gave him so much torture while apart—
 Why does love act with spite right from the start?
Why does love shed blood so relentlessly?
 To make outsiders to love’s truths all flee.

When he dispatched to her a messenger, 4755
 That man, through envy, would try stealing her.
 And what was written by his secretary,
 On his behalf, was read out differently.
 If he made wind his messenger to trust,
 That would become polluted by the dust.
 If he sewed on a bird's wing his love note,
 It would get burned by heat from what he wrote.
 God's jealous guarding blocked paths to solution
 And snapped the flags of troops of his cognition.
 Expectation was his consoling friend 4760
 At first, but this destroyed him in the end.
 'This anguish has no cure,' at times he'd say,
 'No, it's life for my soul,' another day.
 Sometimes he'd re-emerge in self-existence;
 He'd then eat of the fruit of non-existence.
 Once he'd grown cold towards his constitution,
 He'd then see boil the hot springs of his union.
 Once he got used to exile's state of lack,
 Provisions from Non-being then hurried back.
 Chaff from the wheat-ears of his thought was shed; 4765
 Just like the moon, night travellers he led.

Many a parrot talks though it stays mute;
 Many a kind soul looks a bitter brute.
 In silence sit inside the graveyard, then
 You'll clearly witness talking silent men.
 Their soil has the same colour, but inside
 Their state is not the same once they've all died.
 Though living flesh is uniform, within
 Some sadly frown while others happily grin—
 Until you hear their words what can you tell, 4770
 Seeing as their state's veiled from you as well?
 You might perceive them holler, yell, and shout,
 But what about their state can you find out?
 Our forms are one, but made of differing parts;
 Their clay is one, with vastly different hearts.

Voices are likewise uniform, but pain
Fills one, while other voices sound so vain.
On battlefields you'll hear a horse's sound,
And squawks of birds when you should walk around.
One comes from hate, the other comes from friendship; 4775
One comes from joy, the other comes from hardship.
Whoever doesn't know his state at all
Hears all their voices as identical.
An axe's blow can cause the sway of trees;
Others sway simply due to dawn's soft breeze.
The worthless pot caused me a serious error,
Because its contents boiled beneath its cover.
'Come here!' a stranger's fervour now might yell—
He could be true, he could be false as well;
If you've no clue from that higher soul that knows, 4780
Acquire a proper, clue-detecting nose!
The rose in the rose garden's company
Can even, through its scent, make Jacob see.*
Tell more about that sad love-stricken one,
For we have strayed from that Bukharan, son!

*How the lover found his beloved, and the explanation of
how the seeker becomes a finder, for 'Whoever does an atom's
weight of good work will see it'**

For seven years that youth searched ceaselessly,
Becoming ghost-like for his fantasy;
God's shade was over this devotee's head;
Seekers transform to finders up ahead.
The Prophet said, 'When you knock on a door 4785
Someone will come out if you wait some more';
If you wait at a man's address, you'll see
That person's face appear eventually;
Dig deeper each day in a muddy pit
And you'll find water there by doing it.
Even if you do not believe, please know
That you will reap one day what you now sow.

You struck a stone on iron and yet there
 Was no spark—this can happen, though it's rare.
 The intellect of one who doesn't gain 4790
 Fortune one time will claim that all's in vain,
 Saying: 'One sowed, but didn't reap as well;
 Another found no pearl inside his shell.
 Balaam and Satan didn't gain a smidgen
 From all their acts of worship and religion.'
 A hundred thousand Prophets and great mystics
 Do not come to the notice of such sceptics;
 He cites two who spread darkness, so how should
 His fate bring to his heart things that are good?
 There are so many who eat bread with glee, 4795
 Then die when one bite chokes them suddenly—
 Ill-fortuned one, don't eat bread as they do
 Lest you fall into tribulation too!
 Millions of men eat bread and strengthen from it;
 They find bread nourishes as well their spirit—
 So why are you in the minority
 Unless deprived due to stupidity?
 Dismissing this world that is brightly lit
 By sun and moon, he looks into a pit,
 And says, 'Where is the light if all that's true?' 4800
 'Lift your head from the pit—look where we do!
 That light has shone down all across the land,
 But won't reach your head buried in the sand.'
 Leave that pit—enter palaces instead.
 Don't squabble! *Squabble brings bad luck you dread.*
 Don't tell me, 'So-and-so sowed seeds right here,
 But locusts ate up all his crops that year—
 When there's a risk why should I till this land
 And scatter seeds around with my own hand?'
 Despite your trusted reasoning, others still 4805
 Sowed seeds and now their barns receive their fill.
 Whoever knocks upon doors patiently
 One day gains entry and finds intimacy;
 Fearing gaolers, he hid in fields at night—
 He found the one he loves there, shining bright,

Torch-like. He then asked God, 'Who made this happen?

O God, have mercy on this poor nightwatchman!

You made the means, though I knew not my fate;

You took me up from hell to heaven's gate.

You made the means for this act for this reason:

4810

So I won't think ill even of a tree's thorn.'

When legs break, God gives wings, which are worth more;

Likewise in pits he opens up a door.

God says, 'Don't think about being on a tree

Or in the pit—look at Me; I'm the Key!'

Dear reader, if you want to read some more,

You'll find the rest by looking in Book Four.

BOOK FOUR

Prose Introduction

The fourth departure to the best of abodes and the most glorious of benefits. The hearts of mystics, through studying it, will be given joy like the joy of the meadows and the sound of the clouds, and the intimacy of eyes with the pleasantness of sleep. In it there is the exhilaration of spirits and the cure for bodies. It is such that the pure of heart crave it and love it, and spiritual wayfarers seek it and yearn for it. It is delight for eyes and joy for souls and the best of fruits to gather, and the most glorious of wishes and desires. It takes the afflicted to the doctor and it guides the lover to his beloved.

Praise be to God for the most magnificent of gifts and the most precious of wishes. It is the renewer of the pledge of love and makes easy the problem faced by people in difficulty. Perusing it will increase sorrow for those who are far from the truth, while increasing the happiness and gratitude of the fortunate ones. Its bosom holds fineries that even the bosoms of singing girls do not hold, as a reward for the people endowed with both knowledge and action, for it is like a full moon that has risen and good luck that has returned; it increases the hope of the hopeful and augments the devotion of the practitioners. It raises expectations after depression and increases hope after despair. Like a sun shining between clouds, it is light to our companions and a treasure to our successors, *And we ask God to help us to thank Him, for thanksgiving is a means of binding what is at hand and for hunting more of it, and only what He wishes happens.*

I had been roused from sleep to love's sensations,
Preoccupied by cool, sweet exhalations,

When a dove in a thicket close to me
Began to sing with sobs so beautifully;

If I had sobbed before her with such passion
For So'ad, then my spirit, through contrition,

Would have been healed, but hers predate my own:
'Preceders have more excellence' it's known.

May God have mercy on those who came prior and those who come later and those who fulfil their vows and those who seek to do so, with His grace and generosity and many benefits and favours, for He is the best petitioned one and the noblest object of hope:

*'God is the best protector and He is the most merciful of those who show mercy'** and the best of friends and the best of heirs and the best successor, and the provider to worshippers who sow and till, and God bless Mohammad and his noble family, and all the Prophets and Messengers. O Lord of the two worlds, Amen.

Exordium

O Light of God, Hosamoddin, tonight
The Masnavi outshines moons through your light.
 Men's hopes lie in your lofty aspiration,
 Which draws this poem, but to which location?
 You've tied *The Masnavi's* neck, and held tight;
 You drag it in directions out of sight.
The Masnavi runs there; the dragger's hidden,
 Unseen by people who lack proper vision.
 Because you are *The Masnavi's* real source, 5
 If it extends, that's due to you of course.
 Since it's your wish, God wants that too, no doubt—
 God grants each single wish of the devout.
 You have been someone who *belongs to God*—
 Now *'God is for Him'** comes as your reward.
The Masnavi gives thanks for you and raises
 Its hands up for thanksgiving and your praises.
 God saw its lips and hands had your thanks' trace
 And granted favour, increase, and His grace.
 Since those who thank are promised gain, it's clear 10
 Those who prostrate are blessed by drawing near:
*'Prostrate and draw near!'** God said, didn't He?
 This leads to spiritual proximity.
 It's due to this that He'll bestow His favour
 Not for the clamour caused by such behaviour.
 We're happy like the vineyards here with you—

Since you decree, draw us as you can do.
 Draw to the Hajj this caravan through distance,
 Esteemed prince of 'Joy is the key to patience'.
 Hajj is a visit only to the building— 15
 Hajj to the building's Lord is more fulfilling.
 I called you 'Sword of Truth' and 'Light'—you are
 The sun; both epithets are of that star.
 The sword and light are one if you can see:
 The sun's sword is from light most certainly.
 The moon sends moonbeams while the sun shines light—
 Find this in the Qur'an now and recite.*
 The sun was called 'the light' in the Qur'an
 While 'beam' stands for the moon in there, good man.
 The sun is praised more, so its light must be 20
 Ranked higher than the moon's light obviously:
 In moonlight, many couldn't see the way,
 But saw it when the sunlight shone by day.
 Sunlight shows what is bartered, and that made
 The daytime the appropriate time to trade—
 Then real from counterfeit is plain to see
 And traders saved from fraud and trickery.
 The sunlight therefore shines on earth as aid,
 'A mercy to the worlds'* for all who trade.
 The forger hates it as a wretched pain; 25
 It makes his forgeries valueless and vain.
 The false coin loathes the traders with a passion
 And curs true Sufis in a similar fashion.
 The Prophets have to deal with enemies,
 Then angels shout out, 'O Lord, help them, please!
 Preserve the lamp's flame that shines light forever
 From puffs to blow it out from every robber.'
 The light's foes are the thief and counterfeiter—
 Deliver us from these two foes, O Saviour!
 Shine light down on this fourth book we've begun, 30
 Since the fourth heaven sends the rising sun.
 The same way from the fourth shine bright light down,
 So it may reach each country and each town.
 If men say 'It's a tale', then they're tales too;
 If they see it as gold, they're just as true.

The Nile was made of blood to each Egyptian,
 Pure water, though, to Moses's saved nation.*

Here now appears a sight of these words' foe—
 He's falling headfirst to hell's flames below:
 O Light of Truth, you saw that one's condition— 35
 God showed the outcome for his every action.
 Your eyes see the unseen and they possess,
 Like it, a mastery—may they not see less!
 If you complete the story that we view
 As our state's essence, that act would be true.
 For 'somebodies', leave 'nobodies' of earth—
 Complete it for those who have actual worth.
 This tale was left unfinished in Book Three;
 Now it's the fourth book, finish it for me!

*Conclusion of the story about that lover who fled
 the nightwatchman into an unfamiliar orchard,
 and, through sheer joy at finding his beloved there,
 prayed for blessings for the nightwatchman, saying:
 'It may be that you hate something, but it is
 better for you.'*

We were relating how that person fled 40
 From the nightwatchman, and then found instead
 Inside the orchard, she who'd won his heart,
 For whom he'd pined much during years apart.
 Her shadow wasn't seen—he'd only heard
 About her like a legendary bird,
 Apart from once, when it occurred by fate,
 And seeing her made his heart palpitate.
 After that, though he tried relentlessly,
 That harsh one gave no opportunity.
 Neither his wealth nor begging could succeed— 45
 She was indifferent and lacked any need.
 On lovers' lips God smeared well at the start

A taste of their desired aim or sought art.
When they begin to hunt their goal, each day
He sets new snares for them along the way.
After He hurls them to continue searching,
He'll say, 'Bring payment first ahead of entering!'
They follow still that scent and alternate
Between deep love and being disconsolate.
Each one hopes for a fruitful end in store, 50
That on that day they'll open up the door.
Again, it's shut to that door-worshipper,
But he grows ardent, hopeful, thirstier.

That youth stepped in the orchard happily
And came upon his treasure suddenly.
Thus, the nightwatchman was a means God made
To drive him to the orchard unafraid:
He saw his sweetheart with a bright lamp look
In search of a lost ring beside a brook;
Savouring the moment, he then started praying 55
To God, and prayed for that nightwatchman, saying:
'I caused him loss by my flight and departure,
So scatter on him much more gold and silver.
Relieve him of his toil and let him be
As happy as I am now she's near me.
In this world and the next, bless him with peace,
And from his toil please give this man release,
O God, although it is the watchman's nature
To always wish for people harm and bother.'
If they hear of a new fine from their king 60
On subjects, they enjoy their suffering;
And if the king's kind mercy is reported,
That his old plan to fine them is aborted,
Nightwatchmen's souls mourn his decision badly—
They have so many negative traits sadly.
He prayed for that nightwatchman—it was due
To him that comfort came within his view;
He was his cure, though poison to another,
Because that man had joined him with his lover.

Absolute evil's nowhere to be seen; 65
 Evil is relative—that's what I mean.
 In this world there's no poison and no meat
 That's not one's fetter and another's feet:
 The feet to one, a fetter to another;
 The meat to one, yet poison for his brother.
 Snake poison gives the snake some benefit,
 But men will meet their death because of it.
 The sea's a field for creatures of the water,
 But for terrestrials it is death and torture.
 Experienced men, consider carefully 70
 The thousand ways of relativity:
 Zayd* might be like a devil to one person,
 But to another he is like a sultan.
 One will call Zayd a saint, another will
 Say Zayd's an infidel whom we should kill.
 Zayd is one essence, yet he is protection
 To one, while to the next he is affliction.
 If you want him as sugar-like to you,
 Then look at him now through his lover's view—
 Don't look with your own eyes! No, you must try 75
 To look with the beloved's seeker's eye.
 Close your own eyes from that one who's so lovely;
 Borrow eyes from his lovers to see sharply!
 Borrow from Him directly eyes and vision,
 Then look at Him with His eyes for precision.
 You'll not feel weary then, nor satiated.
 '*God shall belong to Him,*' Mohammad stated,
 'T'll be his eye, his hands and heart, so he
 Can flee unfortunate things successfully.'
 Things normally disapproved can in the end 80
 Become approved when leading to the Friend.

Story about that preacher who began every homily with a prayer on behalf of oppressors, unbelievers, and the hard-hearted.

A preacher prayed for highway robbers when
 Upon the pulpit, which astonished men.
 He raised his hands, 'My Lord and my Possessor,

Forgive the fraud, the bad man, the oppressor,
And all who mock the people who act well,
And those with doubting hearts, each infidel.’
He wouldn’t pray for pure and godly people,
Only for those whom most considered evil.
They told him, ‘This is not the normal way; 85
One shouldn’t pray for those who go astray.’
He answered, ‘Goodness is all I’ve received
At their hands. This is why I’m not deceived:
They did so much wrong, so much tyranny,
That from bad ways to good they prompted me.
Whenever worldly things stole my attention,
I suffered beatings from those men I mention.
I then sought refuge from foes up above—
Those wolves thus drove me to the path of love.
Since they have caused my self-reform, I should 90
Pray for their sakes much more than for the good.’

God’s slave cries out to Him because of pain;
His suffering makes him desperately complain.
God answers, ‘Pain and suffering in the end
Have made you beg Me and find ways to mend
Your flaws—complain instead about My grace
That drives you far from Me and out of place.’
Every foe is your medicine—it’s true
He’s the elixir, benefiting you,
Because you flee them, then in your withdrawal 95
You seek assistance from the Lord’s bestowal.
In truth, your friends are your real foes, since they
Distract you from God’s Presence far away.
The porcupine’s behaviour is so similar:
When it is beaten hard, it then grows bigger.
It will expand the more men cudgel it,
Becoming fatter every time it’s hit.
The faithful’s soul is similar, you know:
It grows expansive with each powerful blow.
That is why suffering and debasement both 100
Were tasted more by Prophets—for their growth:

It's so their souls grow stronger than the rest,
 For others have not been through such a test.
 People will rub harsh liquid into hide,
 To make it soft and fine, a source of pride.
 If that harsh liquid isn't rubbed this way,
 The hide becomes unclean and rots away.
 Consider Man an untanned hide, since he
 Becomes both stiff and foul so easily.
 Rub in much liquid, though it's harsh and bitter, 105
 Then see the hide turn pliant, clean, and firmer.
 But if you cannot, try to be content
 With suffering you wish God had never sent.
 Suffering for the Beloved cleans your soul;
 His knowledge is beyond your mind's control.
 When one sees sweetness, suffering then tastes sweet;
 When one sees good health, medicine tastes sweet.
 In death, one sees one's own victorious end;
 One then would say, '*Kill me, O trusty friend!*'*

That nightwatchman brought someone benefit; 110
 He was rejected still for doing it.
 Faith's mercy was cut off from him—the spite
 Of Satan had enveloped him that night.
 He was a factory's store of spite and anger;
 Such spite's the root of unbelief and error.

Jesus was asked 'What is the hardest thing to face in existence?'

Jesus was asked by a clear-headed man once:
 'What is the hardest hurdle in existence?'
 Jesus told him, 'God's rage, and it is clear—
 Even hell trembles at it out of fear.'
 The man asked, 'What can grant security 115
 From it?' 'Quit your own rage immediately!'

The watchman had become a mine of rage,
 His rage surpassing wild beasts' at that stage.

How could he hope for mercy from the Lord
When he had not turned back from what's abhorred?
Although the world can't just discard their kind,
Such talk can make you leave the path behind—
The world can't do without your urine either,
But that is not the purest *gushing water*.*

The lover intends to take advantage and the beloved screams at him.

She was alone when that most simple lover 120
Attempted suddenly to kiss and hug her.
That beauty screamed at him and left him shaken:
‘You mind your manners! Do not be so brazen!’
He said, ‘But we’re alone with no one near;
I am a thirsty man and water’s here.
Apart from wind there’s nothing else here stirring—
Who’s present? Who’s to stop this from occurring?’
She said, ‘You crazy man, a fool today
As ever, heedless of what sages say.
You saw the wind stir, so you now should know 125
The wind’s own mover’s here and makes it blow.
The fan, or rather God’s control of it,
Makes the wind move whenever He deems fit.
That portion which is under our direction
Will not blow till you start its operation—
The movement of this wind, you simple man,
Depends upon you and upon the fan.’

Breath from one’s lips is under the control
Likewise of your own body and your soul:
Sometimes you turn breath into eulogy, 130
Sometimes into most biting mockery.
The different winds’ states you should tell apart,
For brains see the whole picture from one part:
In spring, God makes wind gentle, but remember
How He transforms that same wind in December.
He sent the Sarsar* wind to Aad; with ease
For Hud* He made it a sweet-perfumed breeze.

He makes one wind like Simoom,* poisonous,
 But also makes a breeze enliven us.
 He put the wind-like breath in you and me, 135
 So we can know winds by analogy.
 Speech comes from breath and can be harsh or sweet,
 Poison to some, while to some others meat.
 The fan does not just give a pleasant breeze;
 It's also meant to drive off flies and fleas.
 Why should the fan for God's Divine Decree
 Never send people trials and misery?
 The air that any single fan blows out
 Will either benefit or harm, no doubt.
 Why shouldn't harsh winds, when appropriate, 140
 Bring gentleness instead and benefit?
 From your few wheat grains try and understand
 That all will look like what is in your hand.
 How could the circling winds above, good man,
 Bow as they do without their Driver's fan?
 Is it not true that when it's time to winnow
 The farmhands pray that God will make the wind blow,
 So that the chaff's kept separate from the grain,
 So some go to the barn, the rest remain.
 And when the wind is subject to delay, 145
 You see them beg God as they turn to pray.
 When labour pains continue without cease,
 Loud screams for air will beg for a release.
 If those who seek wind don't know God's its source,
 Why then do they entreat Him with such force?
 Men on a boat will likewise hope winds blow
 And ask their Lord to send them some below.
 When you have toothache it's the same again—
 You beg with passion to be spared the pain.
 Soldiers beg God, 'Make us victorious, 150
 You who can grant all wishes now for us!
 And talismans are sought out as a favour
 To help reduce contraction pains in labour.
 Everyone therefore knows with certainty,
 That none but God sends wind originally.
 It's certain to the rare men who can tell

That what moves has one moving it as well.
If you can't see Him with your own eyes' vision,
Perceive Him then through His effects' impression:
The soul's what moves the body—though you don't see, 155
Perceive it through the movement of your body.

The lover said, 'I'm rude. That's probably true.
But wise in genuinely seeking you.'
She said, 'Your manners are as seen, I know.
As for the rest, you know the truth, you foe.'

Story about the Sufi who found his wife with another man.

A Sufi went home earlier than before.
His wife was in, behind the only door,
Having sex with the cobbler secretly,
Her body tempted in there carnally.
The Sufi then knocked loudly and the pair 160
Felt stranded, with no route away from there.
The Sufi hadn't come back from his store
So early in the afternoon before.
He came at a most strange time by intention
On this day, due to an inspired suspicion.
His wife was counting on the fact that he
Had never come home early previously.
Her reasoning turned out wrong by fate that day—
God can conceal or He can make you pay.
When you've done wrong, be scared you'll suffer woe, 165
Because that is the seed that God will grow.
He will conceal it for a while, His aim
Being that you soon feel some regret and shame.
When Omar ruled as caliph, he once brought
To his police a thief whom they had sought.
The thief screamed, 'Mercy, Caliph! My defence
Is that this was my very first offence.'
Omar said, 'God forbid that God's decree
Should punish first offenders mercilessly.'
He hides it many times to show His kindness 170

And then He punishes to show His justice,
 So both these attributes are in plain view,
 One giving hope, the other warning you.

The wife had also done this frequently,
 So it seemed trivial, done so easily.
 Her weak intelligence did not then dream
 The jug might not return whole from the stream.
 Fate made her now behave as desperately
 As hypocrites when death comes suddenly:
 No refuge, hope, or way out from this hole 175
 When Azrael comes reaching for one's soul.
 The wife trapped in the bedroom felt that way,
 Paralysed with her partner in dismay.
 The Sufi whispered to himself, 'You two—
 I'll wait before I take revenge on you.
 For now, though, I'll pretend I've no idea,
 So no one else hears of commotion here.
 God will make sure you pay the penalty
 The way an illness strikes one, gradually.'
 The sick man wastes away, like ice, each moment, 180
 But keeps imagining: 'I feel improvement.'
 Like the hyena caught when hunters shout
 'Where is it?' from afar, to lure it out.
 That woman had no other place to hide,
 No exit door below, above, outside;
 No oven even that could hide her lover,
 Nor any large sack that could serve as cover,
 Just like the plain on Resurrection Day:
 No hill, no ditch, no place to hide away.
 God has described the Last Assembly's place: 185
 'There's no unevenness found in that space.'*

The wife hides the lover under her chador and gives an excuse, for
 'The wiles of you women are tremendous.'**

She quickly threw her chador on the man,
 Disguising him as much as someone can.

Under the chador it was still so clear,
Like a sore thumb, that he was hiding here.
The Sufi said, amazed, 'What's up? Tell me.
I've not seen her before here—who is she?'
His wife said, 'She's a lady from the town;
A rich and noble lady of renown.
I'd locked the door, so strangers can't come in 190
Unawares quickly, leading thus to sin.'
The Sufi said, 'How can we help this one?
I don't expect to be paid in return.'
She said, 'She wants now to become related.
She's decent, and by God she's highly rated.
She wished to see our girl and run the rule
Over her, but today she is at school.
She's said, "No matter what she's like, I will
With heart and soul make her my son's bride still."
Her son, who's out of town, is strong and clever; 195
He's independent and a high achiever.'
The Sufi said, 'We're poor and have low standing;
Her family's rich, respected, deemed outstanding—
How can our daughter be her rich son's bride,
Ivory one side, twigs the other side.
In marriage, partners ought to match each other
Or joy won't last as marriage will then suffer.'

*The wife says, 'She is not attached to possessions; her wish is
modesty and uprightness.'*

She said, 'I gave such answers. She replied:
"I don't seek property. I'm satisfied.
Of wealth and property we're very bored, 200
Unlike the common, greedy men who hoard.
We're seeking purity and modesty—
In both worlds these ensure prosperity."'
The Sufi cited poverty again,
So it should not be overlooked, and then
His wife said, 'I've been telling her throughout
How poor we are, so she would have no doubt.
She has a mountain-like conviction; she

Will not be put off by our poverty.
 “My wish is chastity,” is her retort, 205
 “You are sincere with values; you’re my sort.”’
 The Sufi said, ‘This woman’s obviously
 Seen all that we can claim as property:
 A cramped home that has room for just one person,
 Where even one small needle can’t stay hidden.
 She has seen self-restraint and modesty
 With your fine virtues and chaste purity;
 She knows this better than we fathom it—
 The front, the back, the head, the arse of it!
 Yeah right, she can see virtue, and apparent 210
 As well is that our daughter has no servant.
 A daughter’s modesty is clear as day,
 So fathers need not brag in any way.’

I’ve told this story so that you won’t boast
 As much when your offence becomes exposed.
 You make pretentious claims continually;
 It is your creed and practice obviously.
 You’ve cheated like this wife, yet you still dare
 To lie and with pretence set your own snare.
 You feel ashamed before some low-life babblers 215
 But not before God—who would you say matters?

*The Reason why God is called ‘the Hearing One’ and
‘the Seeing One’.*

God called Himself ‘*the Seeing One*’ to be
 A strong deterrent to you constantly.
 He called Himself ‘*the Hearing One*’ so that
 You’ll close your lips to any odious chat.
 He called Himself ‘*the Knowing One*’, my dear,
 So you won’t nurse corrupt thoughts out of fear.
 These names do not define God all the same—
 ‘Kaafoor’ can sometimes be a mere slave’s name.*
 God’s names come from His attributes, so they 220

Aren't rootless like the first cause in some way;
Otherwise it would be false mockery,
Like calling someone blind 'one who can see',
Or using 'shy' for someone who is shameless,
Or calling 'beautiful' one who is hideous.
A girl's name can be 'Hajji' or 'God's warrior',
But this tells of her lineage, not about her.
If you apply to her such titles though
She lacks credentials, that's an empty show;
It would be madness and a joke that way—
God is so far *from what wrongdoers say*.

225

'I always knew', the sought one clarified,*
'That, though you're handsome, you are bad inside.
I also knew full well before our meeting
You're bent on being wicked through disputing.
When my eyes redden due to a disease
I know it's you, though I can't see with ease;
You saw me as a lamb without a shepherd,
None watching over me to say I mattered.
When lovers moan in pain and in dejection
It's due to looking in the wrong direction—
They viewed as shepherdless their sought gazelle,
And thought their captive up for grabs as well,
Until an arrow from God's glance had flown
To say, "I am their Guard. They're not alone."
How can I be less than a goat or sheep
To lack protection? I am in the keep
Of someone who is fit for sovereignty—
He knows about the winds that blow on me.
Whether it should blow hot or cold out there
That Knowing One is never unaware.
The self is deaf and blind to God, and I
Can easily tell you're blind with my heart's eye.
I didn't ask about you for eight years
Since I saw idiocy up to your ears!
Someone peers down a bath-stove and falls through—
Why should I have to ask him "How are you?"'

230

235

*Comparison of this world to a bath-stove and piety to a public
bathhouse.*

Lust for this world is like the bath-stove: it
 Is what lets piety's bathhouses be lit,
 But it cannot pollute the pure man's share 240
 While he is in the bath and clean in there.
 The rich are carriers of mere dung—they take
 It to the bath-stove men for their fuel's sake.
 God has filled them with lust and greed inside,
 So that the baths are hot and well supplied.
 Leave the stove and dive in the baths, my friend—
 You must leave it to reach them in the end.
 Anyone in the stove-room's like a slave
 To patient men who know how to behave.
 One in the bathhouse, on his lovely face, 245
 Displays for all a special sign's clear trace;
 The stokers have their own mark, which is found
 On clothing, soot, and smoke that's all around.
 If you can't see, then use your sense of smell
 Which is the best tool for the blind to tell.
 If you can't smell, then make them talk to you,
 Then trace old clues in discourse that is new.
 A stoker who possesses gold will say:
 'I've filled with grime some twenty bowls today.'
 Fire in this world and your greed are the same: 250
 Men's mouths are opened by each tongue-shaped flame.
 Gold here is worthless dung to wisdom's eyes,
 Though, like dung, it will cause the flames to rise.
 The sunshine, which emits heat, also can
 Turn moist grime into fuel for fire, good man.
 The sun can also make stone seem like gold
 To some men's eyes, raising greed twentyfold.
 One says, 'I've gathered wealth.' (What does he own?)
 'I've brought so much grime.' (Now his meaning's known.)
 Though sounding like the butt of a good joke, 255
 One hears such boasts at stoves from men who stoke.
 They say, 'You filled just six bowls—look at me:

I've filled up twenty times that easily.'
Those born in stove-rooms don't know what is pure—
They say that musk smells worse than foul manure.

*The story about the tanner who fainted and fell sick from the scent
of musk and perfume in the bazaar of the perfumers.*

At the perfume bazaar one busy day,
A tanner fainted and lay in the way:
The scent of perfume reached his nose, then he
Felt giddy and collapsed immediately.
Still like a corpse, this man lay unaware 260
In front of passers-by who would walk there.
A crowd of people rushed near suddenly,
Praying, '*God's strength!*','* each with a remedy.
One felt his heart to check he wasn't dead,
Another sprinkled rose water instead,
Unaware it was due to the sweet smell
Of such rose water that the victim fell.
Another rubbed his head and hands, then after
An equally concerned man brought a plaster.
Another brought some sweetened aloes wood. 265
Another stripped him then for his own good.
Another checked his pulse in case of death.
Another stooped down low to smell his breath
In case he had consumed hashish. These men
Could not wake that poor victim up again,
So they rushed to inform his family:
'So-and-so fell and suffers tragically.
He's lying face down, but no one's aware
Of why or how he had his seizure there.'
That tanner had a brother who was clever 270
And very wily, so he hurried over,
Bringing some dog shit with him in his sleeve.
The crowd gave passage when they heard him grieve.
'I know what made my brother faint down here,
And when one knows the cause, the cure is clear.
It's difficult for those who aren't sure,
Through trial and error's way, to find the cure.

It's easy when you know the cause—that key
 Is what ends ignorance immediately.'
 He then thought, 'Awful dog shit's smell remains 275
 So concentrated in his brain and veins—
 He's used that for his tanning every day,
 Trying to earn a living in this way.
 Galen once said, "Give sick men what they will
 Remember from before they'd fallen ill—
 When doing something different is to blame,
 Seek cures in what's familiar and the same."
 He's just like a dung beetle, so don't doubt
 Rose water's scent will knock dung beetles out.
 His remedy is dog shit, as its smell 280
 Is what he is accustomed to as well.'
 'The wicked women for the wicked men'*—
 Remind yourself of its intent again.
 Well-meaning helpers would most likely see
 Rose water as a better remedy,
 But lovely things don't suit the wicked, friend.
 It's not appropriate; it can't heal or mend.

'We see you as bad luck,'* rejecters said
 When from God's message's fine scent they'd strayed.
 'Your words mean misery and painfulness. 285
 Your sermon doesn't augur well for us.
 Do not reprove us; do not waste your breath—
 Do that in public, we'll stone you to death!
 We've thrived so long on trivial things and playing;
 We've not experienced this approach you're saying.
 Our nourishment is bragging, lies, and jest.
 Your speech makes us feel nauseous now at best.
 You're multiplying many times our pains;
 You've drugged us and your opium harms our brains.'

The tanner's brother treats him with the smell of shit.

The brother kept on pushing men away, 290
 So none could see his treatment on that day.

As if to whisper secrets, he leaned close,
Then put the hidden stuff up to his nose.
He'd smeared the dog shit on his palm to ease
And cure the sick man's brain's infirmities.
That man began to stir a short while later.
They said, 'What spells his brother said, the saviour!
He whispered spells and blew inside his ear.
His spells revived a dead man—it was clear.'

Corrupt men always have an inclination 295
Towards flirtation, winks, and fornication.
If prudent counsel's musk won't make them well,
They have to learn to like a noxious smell.
God called the polytheists unclean, for they
Were dung originally, and some men say:
'The worm that has been born in dung won't ever
Transform its nature to sweet-smelling amber.'
From God's light's sprinkling if one's kept apart
He'll stay shell-like, all body with no heart.
If God had given him a share, a bird 300
Could have been conjured easily from a turd.
And not a low, domestic fowl, but one
Known as the bird of wisdom, my dear son.

His sweetheart said,* 'If you lack light as well,
You bring your nose to shit, so it can smell.
From being apart your face is yellowy;
Unripened fruit are what hang from your tree.
Although the pot was blackened by the flame,
Bad meat would not turn tender all the same:
I've made you boil in separation now 305
For eight years, but you're still false anyhow.
Your young grape is as bad as stones for sickness,
Unripe, sour, while the rest are sweet sultanas.'

*That lover begs forgiveness for his sin and his beloved perceives
that as well.*

'I did the test', the lover said, 'to see
 If you're a flirt or modest genuinely.
 I knew of course before the actual test,
 However seeing for yourself is best.
 You're sunshine and you're famous, so what harm
 For me to test you? Why feel such alarm?
 You are I, and I test myself each day 310
 With loss and profit that should come my way.
 Prophets were tested once by enemies,
 So miracles would bring them to their knees.
 With light I've tested my own eye—you are
 The one from whom the evil eye stays far.
 The world's a ruin, you're the gold within—
 Don't be annoyed I've already looked in.
 I acted foolishly then, heaven knows,
 So I could boast forever to my foes,
 So when my tongue named you, my eyes could then 315
 Give proofs of what I'd seen to other men.
 If I've robbed you of honour, I'm not proud—
 Come here, moon, take this sword then use my shroud:
 By your hand only cut apart my body,
 As I belong to your hands and yours only.
 You talk again of separation—cease!
 Do what you wish to, but don't do that please.'
 Eternal speech's way is open now,
 But time's run out, and so we can't see how.
 We've talked of husks, the kernel's hidden though. 320
 If we persist it won't be always so.

*The beloved rejects the apology of her lover, and rubs his duplicity
in his face.*

That man's beloved answered him to say:
 'On your side it is night, on mine it's day.
 Why bring here to be judged your shady plot

To those who see what's true from what is not?
Whatever schemes you try to hide away
Are manifest to us as clear as day.
For you we hide them to give you protection,
So why persist, blasé, with your transgression?
Learn from your ancestor: Adam descended 325
Down to the trial hall when he had offended.
He saw the Knower of all mysteries
Then stood and begged forgiveness without cease.
He sat contrite on dirt eventually,
Yet didn't try evading destiny.
He said, '*We've sinned, Lord*,'* not another sound
On seeing guards were standing all around.
He viewed the guards soul-like, invisible;
Their maces reached as high as possible.
'Be ant-like when near Solomon,' they said, 330
'Or else this mace will break in two your head!'
Stand where you see the truth and far from lies;
For men the best of guardians are your eyes.
Others' advice gives blind men purity,
But when alone they're soiled repeatedly.
Human, you don't lack vision now, but when
Destiny turns eyes blind, you'll lack it then.
It's only very seldom, isn't it,
For one who sees to fall inside a pit?
But for the blind this isn't very rare— 335
It's in the blind man's nature to fall there.
He falls in filth, not knowing what it was:
'Do I smell or is something else the cause?'
If someone sprays some musk on him, of course
He'll think he is himself its sweet smell's source.
O man with vision, your eyes therefore function
As guarding parents giving you protection,
Especially the heart's eye, for that pair
Which see just sensually cannot compare.

'The highwaymen were lurking where I walked;
They tied my tongue in knots in case I talked. 340

A horse with chained legs can't trust easily—
 This is a heavy chain, so pardon me!
 O heart, these words are broken up and stuttering—
 They're pearls, God's jealousy the mill that's crushing.
 Though pearls be ground to tiny bits, they can
 Be used for eyes as tutty still, good man.
 For being broken, pearl, don't start lamenting;
 When ground up you will be illuminating.
 Speech must be broken up at first, before 345
 God, who is needless, fixes it once more.
 Though wheat is broken up and ground for bread,
 'Look here! A perfect loaf!' will soon be said.
 'Since your crime's also been exposed, O lover,
 You too, get broken! Don't try painting over.
 Adam's elect descendants all admit:
 "We have done wrong!"* as they acknowledge it.
 Make your plea and don't argue or debate
 Like Satan, that hard-nosed, cursed reprobate.
 If you think he succeeded through that action 350
 Then try and be contentious and as stubborn.
 Abu Jahl asked for proof a miracle
 From our great Prophet—he was terrible—
 Abu Bakr though did not insist; instead
 "This face speaks naught but truth," is what he said.
 So how can someone like you ever be
 Fit to test someone loved as much as me.'

*A denier tells Ali, 'If you are sure of God's protection,
 throw yourself from the top of this building,' and
 Ali answers him.*

A man who did not worship God one day
 Turned his head to the great Ali to say,
 While standing on a high roof, 'O wise person, 355
 Are you now conscious of your God's protection?'
 'Yes, He's the guard, though He is self-sufficient;
 Ever since I was born He's been consistent.'
 'Then throw yourself down from this roof for me—

Rely on God's protection totally!
Your certainty will be displayed this way;
This proof for your faith will be clear as day.'
'Be quiet and begone!' that man was told,
'So that your life's not pawned for being so bold.
How should a slave be fit to test out God? 360
Does this not strike you as the least bit odd?
How can slaves out of curiosity
Possess the gall to test God, fool? Tell me!
Only God has the right, and He'll prepare
More tests for slaves each moment, so beware!
It's to expose us to ourselves, revealing
The real belief within we've been concealing.
Did Adam tell God, "I have tested you
With all my sins and flaws in order to
Witness, dear King, the clemency You'll show." 365
Who could attempt this ever? Do you know?
Your intellect is so confused this time
That your excuse is much worse than your crime.
Who do you think you are to ever try
To test the one who raised up the whole sky?
You even can't tell good from bad—first test
Yourself before you try to test the rest.
Once you have tested first yourself, no longer
Will you desire to ever test another.
On learning you're a sugar grain, you'll see 370
The sugar house is where you're meant to be.
No need to test God to know you belong—
God won't send sugar somewhere plainly wrong.
The One who has all knowledge will not send
His chief to be a doorman, my good friend.
Intelligent men won't throw jewels in
A toilet bowl with urine still within.
A knowing sage won't send his wheat away
Into a barn that's used to store just hay.'

If a disciple tests his master, he 375
Is asinine, as everyone will see.

If you test out the sacred things, then you,
 Doubting man, will yourself be tested too.
 Your impudence and ignorance at most
 Will be then shown, but he won't be exposed.
 If a dust mote should ever try to weigh
 A mountain, its scale pans will break away,
 For he weighs with his own mind, and a man
 Of God can't ever fit a measuring-pan—
 Intellect's scales can't bear his weight, so he 380
 Smashes them into bits dramatically.
 To test him is presuming you've more power
 Than such a king, above whom none can tower.
 What power do pictures have to think they can
 Test their own painter—they're drawn by that man!
 If they're aware of tests, is it not true
 That these tests are what the same artist drew?
 What are these pictures worth? It's no doubt less
 Than pictures that his knowledge can possess.
 When the temptation comes to test, bad luck 385
 Has visited you and your neck's been struck.
 On feeling this temptation, do not wait
 But turn to pray to God and then prostrate.
 Soak your prostration spot with tears and pray:
 'God, free me from this doubting mind today!
 That moment when you seek to test is not good;
 Your faith's prayer-house is then filled up with brushwood.

*Story about 'The Furthest Place of Worship
 in Jerusalem'* and carob brushwood, and David's
 resolution before the time of Solomon to build that house
 of worship.*

When David's firm resolve to build from rock
 The Furthest Worship-House took a big knock,
 God said to him, 'Announce across the land 390
 You've given up—it won't be by your hand.
 It's not in Our decree that you erect

This worship-house, though you're of the elect.'
 David said, 'Knower of the mysteries,
 Explain my sin for You to tell me "Cease!"'
 'Without sin, you've spilled blood and now you pay
 The price for the oppressed's blood in this way,
 For countless people have been stupefied
 By your voice and have consequently died!
 Much blood was spilled by your voice when you'd sing— 395
 It moves the soul and pleases everything.'
 David said, 'I was overwhelmed by You,
 Drunken with hands tied, what could I then do?
 Is it not true that when they are repentant
Overwhelmed ones are deemed as non-existent?
 'This overwhelmed one is in fact negated
 Relatively to Me,' the Lord then stated.
 'The one who's left himself behind is best
 Among all humans, and the loftiest,
 Next to God's attributes annihilated, 400
 Though it's subsistence if the truth is stated.
 Spirits are under His control; you'll see
 Appearances are subject equally.'
 God said, 'One overwhelmed in Our grace will
 Not be compelled, possessing a free will.'
 The end of his free will is also clear:
 It will be lost completely over here.
 One with free will has no delight within him
 Unless he's fully rid of egotism.
 The world can offer food that most would treasure, 405
 His joy will come though from being rid of pleasure.
 Such pleasures won't affect him when he's tried
 Spiritual pleasures and grown satisfied.

Explanation of 'the Believers are brothers' and 'the truly learned are like one soul', especially the unity between David, Solomon, and the other Prophets, for if you reject one of them, your faith in no Prophet will be perfect—this is a sign of the unity, that if you destroy one house among a thousand, all of them will be destroyed, and not a single wall will be left standing, for 'We do not distinguish between any of them'* and 'An allusion suffices the intelligent'. This is much more than an allusion.*

'Although it won't be built by you,' God said,
 'Your son will soon erect that house instead.
 His work is your work, great king of the sages—
 Believers have bonds outside time and ages.'
 They're numerous and yet their faith is one,
 Many bodies, although in soul they're one.
 Beasts' intellects and souls are lower than
 The different kinds that are possessed by Man,
 And yet beyond men's souls there is the soul
 Of God's Friends with divine breath for their role.
 Animal souls lack union, so don't seek
 It from a spirit that is much too weak.
 If one eats food, the other won't be sated;
 If one bears loads, the other won't be weighted.
 One's happy with the other one's demise,
 Then, jealous of what they own, quickly dies.
 The souls of dogs and wolves are all divided,
 The souls of lions of God, though, are united.
 I used the plural 'souls', since one is many
 When soul is in relation to the body,
 Just as the sunlight seems to multiply
 In separate courtyards to the human eye.
 All of the rays are really one—it's proved
 When separating walls are all removed,
 For if they're gone, Mohammad told us all:
 'Believers then are like a single soul.'

410

415

This discourse raises problems now, my son,
Since it is only a comparison. 420
There is a world of differences between
A lion and a brave man whom you've seen;
When one compares the two though, you would say
They are as one in gambling life away,
Because that brave man does resemble it,
But doesn't match exactly every bit—
No form exactly matches with another
In this world, as you quickly will discover.
I'll raise an inexact match nonetheless 425
To spare your mind confusion and distress:
A lamp is lit in every house at night,
So one can see in darkness through its light.
Light is the soul, lamp body, and the latter
Requires a wick and other kinds of matter;
The lamps with six wicks, for six bodies, need
As their foundation both to sleep and feed.
They can't survive when lacking food and sleep,
And neither with them both, but this gets deep:
They cannot last without a wick and oil, 430
But with them they still aren't reliable—
Their light's a cause and will expire, my friend.
How can they last when daylight brings their end?
And human senses cannot last, since they
Are naught next to the light of Judgement Day.
The senses' light and souls of fathers here
Don't die like grass or fully disappear:
Like stars and moonbeams which still shine at night,
They are effaced by day in sunshine's light,
The way the flea's sting disappears the moment 435
A snake has bitten you—that bite's more potent.
A naked man jumped in a lake to flee
The danger posed by a big bumble bee;
The bee just hovered over him and when
He raised his head above, it stung him then.
The lake is *zeker*, the bee in this example
Is your remembrance of some other people;

Inside *zeker's* waters hold your breath, be strong,
 Leave thoughts and the temptation to do wrong.
 You'll then acquire pure water's nature, so 440
 You will be filled with it from head to toe.
 That nasty bee flees water, and now you,
 Just like the water, terrify it too.
 If you wish, leave the water now you can—
 Boast water's nature too within, good man.
 Those who have fled this world aren't naught; I've said
 They're steeped now in God's attributes instead.
 You could explain this by comparison
 With stars and their relation to the sun.
 If you want a Qur'anic verse, then read 445
 '*They'll be brought to Our presence*'*—so take heed!
 There's no negation when *brought to Our presence*;
 With certainty observe the soul's subsistence.
 Souls blocked from this subsistence just feel torture;
 Souls which attain are free from any barrier.

I've shown this lamp of sensual perception;
 It is for animals—don't seek its union.
 Unite your soul with those of mystic searchers
 Travelling the path instead—their souls are nurturers.
 Your hundred lamps, whether or not they burn, 450
 Are separate from each other, not as one.
 That's why men go to war with one another,
 Though Prophets never fight against a brother.
 The Prophets' light comes from the sun, but sensual
 Light we possess comes from a smoking candle.
 The latter dies, the former in the morning
 Shines bright again—one's snuffed, one keeps on burning.
 The animal soul stays alive through food,
 Dies with what's bad in it as well as good.
 If such a lamp goes finally out one night, 455
 Why should the neighbour's house as well lose light?
 The neighbour's house stays bright, so you can see
 The houses' sensual lamps shine separately.
 The animal soul is intended here,

Not the divine soul. Let this be quite clear.
When the new moon splits darkness suddenly
At night, light fills each window equally.
Light in a hundred homes is one. To test,
Watch if one's light does not fade with the rest.
So long as the bright sun is shining light, 460
It is a guest at every home in sight.
And when the soul's sun sets, without a doubt
The light in all its houses will go out.
They're not the same—it's an analogy:
It guides you, but it robs your enemy.
That vile one's like a spider and he'll spin
A veil of webs that stinks although it's thin.
With his own web he blocked the light by day;
He made his seeing eyes turn blind this way.
Steer with a horse's neck and you'll succeed, 465
But rub its leg and you'll be kicked. Take heed!
Don't ride a wild one with no bridle on.
Heed intellect and faith, then journey on.
Don't view the rest as weak and as inferior.
Destroy the self with patience on this venture!

*Remainder of the story about the building of the Furthest Place of
Worship in Jerusalem.*

When Solomon began the new construction—
Pure like the Kaaba, Mina-like perfection*—
In it much splendour could be easily found,
Not bland like other buildings seen around.
Each rock cut for that building audibly 470
Said right from the beginning, '*Please take me!*'
Just as with Adam's body, light shone out
From all of the cement. And then, without
Someone to carry them, rocks would arrive,
And all the doors and windows came alive.
God says the wall of paradise is not
Ugly and lifeless like the walls we've got;
Just like the body's wall, they are aware—
The house is living, for the king's in there.

Pure water, trees, and fruit—yes, all of them 475
 Have conversations with those in that realm,
 Since paradise was not made from material
 But actions and intentions in its people.
 This building is from lifeless clay and water;
 That building lives through dutiful surrender.
 The first looks like its source with imperfections,
 The second like its source—knowledge and actions.
 Throne, palace, crown, and robes give their replies
 To questions from those up in paradise;
 The rug will fold itself and then each room 480
 Inside the house is swept without a broom.
 Behold the heart's house—grief makes it untidy;
 Without a broom repentance makes it tidy.
 His throne moved by itself across the floor;
 Minstrels emerged from knockers on the door.
The everlasting realm is in the heart—
 Since my tongue can't explain it all, why start?

Solomon went to that house every dawn
 To guide the worshippers who'd also gone.
 He counselled using song as well as speech; 485
 By action, such as bowing down, he'd teach.
 Counsel through action is much more effective,
 Reaching souls though their hearing be defective;
 Leadership's false airs too become much less,
 And so such counsel will have more success.

*Story about the beginning of the caliphate of Osman and his sermon
 explaining how the counsellor who practises what he preaches is
 better than the one who just talks.*

When he became the caliph, Osman sat
 Upon the pulpit's top step, knowing that
 Mohammad's pulpit had three steps and on
 His turn Bu Bakr sat on the second one,
 Then Omar chose the third on his accession 490
 Out of respect for custom and religion—

When Osman's turn came he went all the way
 Up to the top on his blessed, fortunate day.
 A fault-finder protested, 'You should stop!
 Those two did not take that seat at the top,
 So how come you've gone higher than that pair
 When you rank lower and cannot compare?'
 'If I select the third step,' Osman said,
 'They'll reckon I'm like Omar then instead.
 If on the second, then you will exclaim: 495
 "That's Abu Bakr's! He thinks he's the same."
 The top step is Mohammad's—no one can
 Imagine that I'm similar to that man.'
 Instead then of a sermon while sat there,
 He sat in silence till the time for prayer.
 No one dared say, 'Recite or go away
 From our mosque!' as the hours passed on that day.
 Deep awe filled all those gathered in that place
 And God's light filled completely all the space.
 The seeing saw His Light fill all those spaces; 500
 The blind could feel its warmth upon their faces—
 Through warmth alone the blind could realize
 A never-setting sun shone on their eyes.
 This warmth can open eyes, so they can view
 The essence of all hearable things too.
 Its heat induces new states of contraction;
 Its radiance gives hearts freedom and expansion.
 When the blind one is warmed by lasting light
 From joy he says, 'I can see. I have sight!'

You're drunk Bo 'l-Hasan,* but a word of caution: 505
 There's still a long way till that total vision.
 The blind one's portion from the sun can be
 A hundred times this! *God knows best for me.*
 Great Avicenna lacked the power to write
 Descriptions of the one who's seen that light.
 Though many times as strong, whose tongue's description
 Could draw the veil that covers its perception?
 If it should touch the veil, then understand

God's sword will cut off that poor person's hand.
 What's a mere hand? He'll chop his head off, brothers. 510
 That stupid head which chops off heads of others.
 I've said this hypothetically, since speech
 Cannot extend as far as that its reach.
 With testicles my aunt would be my uncle—
 That's hypothetical; it isn't factual.
 The tongue's far from the eye of certainty.
 A thousand years? No, more than that for me.
 But don't despair, for if God wills, at night
 Immediately the sky will shine down light.
 His power each moment chooses to bestow 515
 On stars their influence over mines below.
 The sky's stars end the darkness—higher than these,
 God's star is rooted in His qualities.
 Seeker of help, the distant sky is near
 To earth through its effects—this should be clear:
 Saturn looks so remote from earth, for instance,
 Yet it exerts its influence through the distance.
 He folds it like a shade on its return—
 What is a shadow's length next to the sun?
 And from pure star-like souls comes succour to 520
 The stars up in the heavens over you.
 These stars' forms keep our forms in their control,
 But they must all obey the human soul.

*In explanation of why philosophers say 'Man is the microcosm',
 while mystics themselves say, 'Man is the macrocosm'. It is because
 the knowledge of philosophers is restricted to the form of Man, while
 that of mystics penetrates to the truth of the essence of Man.*

Therefore, in form, you are the microcosm,
 While inwardly you are the macrocosm.
 The branches look like they're the ripe fruit's source,
 But they exist for that fruit's sake of course,
 Which makes that first. With no prior wish for fruit
 Why would the gardener ever plant the root?
 That tree was born from fruit thus inwardly, 525

Though outwardly the fruit comes from the tree.
'Adam and other prophets now stand after

Myself, Mohammad, and my mission's banner.'

That's also why that virtuous one insisted:

'We're last yet also first'—that isn't twisted.

'In form I come from Adam, but in essence

I'm my forefather's father—that's not nonsense,
Since angels bowed to him obediently

And he rose up to heaven thanks to me.

This forefather was really born from me,

530

And likewise from the fruit emerged its tree.

Thought leads to action, which is consequential,

Especially the thought that is eternal.

To sum up, it increasingly is clear

The caravan from heaven heads down here

In one breath, for it's not a lengthy journey—

Deserts can't be too vast for the Almighty.

Every moment the heart goes to the Kaaba;

The body, through the heart, too gains much favour.

Near and far are for bodies in this realm;

535

They've naught to do with God's transcending them.

Once God transforms the body, then its motion

Is not in lengths for measured calculation.

There's still much hope—step forward and keep walking,

Young man, just like a lover, and *quit talking!*

Although you close your eyes without a care,

You are not still—the ship transports you there.

Explanation of the hadith: My community is like Noah's ark—whoever joins me will be saved and whoever stays behind will drown.

That's why the Prophet said what now seems clearer:

'I'm like the ark of Noah for our era,

With my companions in huge storms of rain—

540

If you hold onto us, there's grace to gain.'

When you are with the master far away

From ugliness, on his ark night and day,

Protected by a soul that is life-giving,

Asleep on his ark, you are then still travelling.
 Don't cut links with the prophet of your day—
 Do not rely on your own skills this way!
 Even if lion-like, without a guide
 You are astray and base, though puffed with pride.
 Fly only with the master's wings, so you 545
 Might see the master's armies in plain view.
 Your wings will be the waves of his own kindness;
 Later you're borne by flames of his own harshness.
 Do not imagine they're a contradiction—
 Through their effects observe how they're in union:
 Now he will make you fertile like the land,
 Then he'll inflate you hugely. Understand,
 He leaves the mystic's body to lie fallow,
 So roses grow on it, as in a meadow.
 But only he sees it—let it be known 550
 That heaven gives scent to the pure alone.
 Remove denial of him now from your brain—
 His garden's basil will come as your gain,
 And you'll perceive His perfume sent from heaven
 The way Mohammad smelt that scent from Yemen.*
 If you line up now in ascension's queue,
 Like Boraq, non-existence soon draws you,
 Not physically as if your aim's the moon,
 But how a cane can change to sugar soon;
 Not how the vapour rises in ascent, 555
 But how the foetus turns intelligent.
 Non-existence's steed takes you through the distance,
 If you're effaced, up to the real existence.
 Its hooves brush past the mountains and the seas,
 Leaving behind the sensual world with ease.
 Alight the ark and ride the way souls flow
 Towards their True Beloved from below.
 Without limbs soar to the eternal realm,
 As souls flee non-existence, just like them.

If listeners' ears were not asleep, you may 560
 Have torn the veil of reasoning away.

Rain pearls, O heavens, on His speech for me.
 Feel small, world, when in His proximity.
Your pearls will multiply if you comply,
 And you'll gain speech and sight, too, from on high.
You'd rain them for your own sake after all,
 Since this would multiply your capital.

*Story about Belqis, the Queen of Sheba, sending a gift
to Solomon.*

Belqis's gift was forty mules, which bore
 As gifts some gold bricks taken from her store.
On reaching Solomon, all could behold 565
 A marvellous realm carpeted with gold.
Her messengers rode on deep in that realm
 Until the gold no longer dazzled them.
'Let's take our gold back and retrace our route,'
 They said, 'Our task with gold will not bear fruit.
The ground itself is gold in this strange country—
 Bringing gold here as gifts is utter folly.'
(You who bring intellects to God with pride,
 It's worth less than the mud beneath your stride.)
When their gift's worthlessness was very clear, 570
 They were drawn back, embarrassed to be here.
'Whether or not it has worth in this land,
 It's not our call—we're bound by her command.
We have to take it, whether mud or gold;
 The order means we'll do as we've been told.'
'If they say, "Take it back!"' the leader said,
 'We will obey the new command instead.'
Solomon smiled when it was brought in view:
 'When did I ask for mouldy bread from you?
I don't say, "Bring a gift obediently!"' 575
 But "Show you're worthy of a gift from me."
For I've got gifts from the Unseen, which you
 Would want if you knew them, but you've no clue.
The gold-producing star's your deity—
 Worship the one who made that star you see!
You pray towards the sun up in the sky,

Devaluing the soul which should rank high.
 The sun heats for us at God's order, dunc—
 Calling that "God" is foolish ignorance.
 And if the sun's eclipsed, what use is it? 580
 Can you remove the blackness over it?
 Won't you then bring to God's court your sad plight,
 Begging: "Remove the blackness. Send us light!"
 If you are killed at night, where's your sun then
 To cry to it and beg it saves your men?
 Disasters usually happen late at night
 And that is when your god is not in sight.
 If you bow properly to God, you'll be
 Rid of stars, welcome in His company.
 When you come close we will share a discussion 585
 To see the sun at midnight with new vision:
 Pure spirit is its actual rising place;
 Night and day have no difference in that space.
 Day is what starts at sunrise usually—
 When this sun shines though, night fades permanently.
 An atom cannot stand before the sun.
 Your sun stand next to God? That can't be done.
 Your sun which dazzles eyes by its bright glare,
 Leaving men all perplexed—you'll see it there,
 Next to God's Throne's Light, atom-like, my friends, 590
 Compared with Boundless Light that never ends.
 You'll see it vulnerable and small in size
 When God bestows the power to your eyes.'
 God's light, like alchemy, can from afar
 Send sparks through vapour to create a star.
 The rare elixir can with half a beam
 Create this sun from darkness while men dream.
 The marvellous alchemist, with just one action,
 Attached so many qualities to Saturn.
 The other stars and spiritual essences 595
 Must similarly be compared with this.
 Physical eyes are subject to the sun—
 Seek a divine eye, a superior one,
 So sparkling rays of sunlight will appear
 Abased before its vision when drawn near,

Since light is fire, while this is much more bright;
Fire seems so dark compared with such pure light.

*The miracles and light possessed by Abdollah
Maghrebi.*

Abdollah Maghrebi said, 'With my sight
For sixty years I never saw dark night.
For sixty years my eyes did not see darkness, 600
Neither by night nor day, and not in sickness.'
Sufis confirmed, 'His words are true, for we
Would follow him at night-time carefully
To wastelands full of thorns and ditches, where
He shone like the full moon's most radiant glare.
Without the need to turn around he'd say:
"Watch out for that ditch. Veer the other way!"
Later he would advise, "Head right instead
Because a thorn bush lies where you will tread."
We'd kiss his feet at daybreak and they would 605
Seem like a bride's unweathered, soft feet should.
No trace of dirt on them that we could notice,
Nor scratch, nor bruise—they were completely flawless.'
God had made Maghrebi a 'Mashreqi':
He made the sunset sunrise-bright, you see.*
This sun of suns' light rides so high by day;
This man protects all people, come what may.
How should that glorious light not be protection
When it brings countless suns before one's vision?
Through his light you keep safely walking on 610
Near dragons and each deadly scorpion.
That holy light proceeds ahead and can
Tear totally apart each highwayman.
He won't see Prophets put to shame—recite:
*'In front of them what travels is the light.'**
That light increases at the Resurrection,
But ask God for a sample at this junction,
Since He bestows it on the clouds and mist.
God knows best what to say. Do not resist!

*Solomon told the messengers of Belqis to go back to her with the gifts
that they had brought and invited Belqis to his faith and the
rejection of sun-worship.*

‘Go back, embarrassed messengers! This gold 615
Stays yours. Bring me a heart. Do what you’re told.
And add this gold of mine to yours, then stuff
It up your mule’s rear end! I’ve had enough.
Gold rings are for mules’ genitals. For lovers
Gold is a face turned yellow from love’s tortures.
That face becomes the object of God’s gaze,
While gold mines will receive just solar rays.
Is it appropriate for comparison—
The Lord’s attention and that of the sun?
Turn your souls to a shield preventing me 620
From seizing you, though captive already.’
Birds lured by bait are on the roof up there;
With wings outstretched they’re trapped still in the snare.
Each pinned its heart and soul both on the bait,
Though not yet in the trap, but it’s too late:
Glancing towards the bait is actually
Binding its feet with knots unwittingly.
The bait says, ‘Though you glance to snatch a view,
I’ve snatched stability and calm from you.
When that glance pulls you to me, be aware 625
That I’m not heedless of you drooling there.’

*Story about the pharmacist whose weight was clay soap and how a
customer who ate such clay stole some of it secretly while sugar was
being weighed.*

A man who would have cravings to eat clay
Bought sugar from the pharmacist one day.
The pharmacist was a most cunning man,
Using clay weights, not stone, with a clear plan.
He said, ‘My weights are made of clay, and so,
If you desire some sugar, you should know.’

The customer replied, 'My need is desperate,
 So use whatever you think most appropriate.'
He then thought to himself, 'If truth be told,
 For one who eats clay they're worth more than gold.'
Just like the broker who once told his son:
 'I've found a bride for you, a lovely one.
She's very pretty, but that ravisher
 Is daughter of the town's confectioner.'
The son said, 'That to me is even better—
 His daughter must be curvier and sweeter.'

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The buyer said, 'If you have only clay
 For weights, that's better—I crave clay all day.'
The pharmacist placed clay inside one pan
 Instead of stone weights, then that clever man
Placed sugar in the other the same way
 Up to the weight of that first piece of clay.
He took his time to find a pick to use,
 Leaving the customer there as a ruse—
That one gazed at the clay and stealthily
 He stole some, acting so predictably.
He feared, 'He'd better not look round at me
 To check up on me for security.'
The pharmacist saw, but stayed occupied.
 'Steal more, sick man, till you are satisfied.
If you desire to steal clay, go ahead—
 You'll just be stealing from yourself instead.
You're frightened of me, but from foolishness.
 I'd be more sad if you were eating less.
Though I am busy, I'm not such a donkey
 To let you pilfer this fine sugar from me.
Once you see how much sugar you have bought,
 Matching the clay that's left, you'll see I'm not
The fool—you are.' The bird likes watching bait,
 But bait is robbing it—to see, just wait.
While coveting your brother's meat, your eye
 Is feeding off your own kebab supply.
Such staring is a poisonous arrow—cease

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Or else your lust will grow, restraint decrease.
 Worldly wealth snares the birds here that are feeble;
 Wealth from beyond snares those birds that are noble,
 For it makes mighty birds fall captive there
 Within that realm, which is the deepest snare.

Solomon said, 'I don't crave your dominion, 650
 But rather I will save you now from ruin,
 For in your kingdom you are now the bondsmen;
 True rulers are the ones who flee destruction.'
 O prisoner of this world, ridiculously
 You've called yourself its ruler—can't you see?
 The world's slave with soul captive, for how long
 Will you claim lordship, as if you are strong?

*Solomon shows kindness and gentleness to the envoys,
 drives away annoyance and harshness from their hearts,
 and explains to them the reason he did not accept
 the gift.*

'Envoys, I'll send you as my envoys now,
 And my refusal's better anyhow.
 Relate to Belqis wonders you have seen 655
 About the gold-filled fields where you have been,
 So she learns we don't covet gold at all—
 We get ours from the One who makes it all.
 The One who, at His mere wish, the whole planet
 Would turn to gold with precious pearls laid on it.
 (You who choose gold, it is for this same reason
 God turns earth silver for the Resurrection.)*
 We don't need gold; we are so skilful we
 Turn earthly beings to gold with alchemy.
 How could we beg more gold from you, we who 660
 Can make an alchemist of all of you.
 Abandon even your own realm, my sons—
 Beyond these there are more dominions.
 You call a mere stone "throne" and deem it more

Your seat of honour, while outside the door.
You don't rule your own beard—your power's that feeble.
You can't claim mastery over good and evil.
Your beard turns white regardless of your wishes.
You with strange hopes should feel embarrassed by this.
He owns the kingdoms; He'll give hundreds to
Those who bow down and wipe all else from view.
Prostration to the Lord tastes sweeter than
Two hundred worldly fortunes to each man.
"I don't want kingdoms," then you will exclaim,
"Keeping prostration's kingdom is my aim."

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Worldly kings have an evil attitude;
They've no clue of the wine of certitude,
Or they'd, like Ebn-e Adham, lose their wits
And start to smash their kingdom into bits.
But God wished to maintain this world, so He
Placed seals on mouths and eyes deliberately,
So thrones and crowns would taste sweet and they'd say:
'We'll tax landowners and then have our way.'
Should taxes raise gold-filled dunes of much worth,
Inheritance like this must stay on earth:
Kingship and gold can't travel with your soul—
Give gold away, acquire true vision's kohl
To see this world's a well, and then grip fast
The rope as Joseph did once in the past,
So when you get out from it finally,
Your soul says: '*Goodness—this youth is for me!*'*
Inside the well you see the wrong way round,
Labelling 'gold' some stones upon the ground.
Children in folly, when they wish to play,
Claim crockery is gold in the same way.
Mystics are alchemists, so to their vision
Gold mines are worthless and have no attraction.

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How a dervish saw in a dream a group of shaikhs and begged for a daily portion of lawful food without having to earn it and while unable to worship, and how they instructed him and how the bitter and sour fruit of the mountain became sweet to him through their grace.

A dervish once said, 'In my dream last night
 I saw some Khehr-like Sufis. What a sight!
 I asked them, "Where can I obtain, for free, 680
 Lawful food that will not be bad for me?"
 They led me to the mountains and they shook
 The fruit down from the trees, and I partook.
 "God made the fruit taste sweet to you," they said,
 "Through our grace and arrival for your aid.
 Eat what is pure and lawful now without
 A headache or the need to rush about."
 This food gave me amazing speech that day
 Which stunned minds who'd now relish things I'd say.
 I asked, "O Lord, is this a strange temptation? 685
 Give something to me that from most stays hidden."
 That speech left me; I gained a happy heart.
 Like pomegranates I could split apart
 From mystic savour: I said, "On that side,
 If there is just this joy I feel inside,
 I wouldn't ask for more grace or more gains;
 I'd shun the houris and the sugar canes.
 From former earnings, as most people do,
 I've saved in my shirtsleeve a coin or two."

He resolves: 'I will give this gold to that firewood-carrier since I've gained sustenance from the miracles of the shaikhs,' but the firewood-carrier is upset with his thought and intention.

'A poor man with some brushwood passed that way, 690
 Weary and worn out by his work that day.
 So I thought, "Since I have become now free
 From earning my own living, thankfully,

Fruit tasting sweet to me which others hate
And sustenance arriving on my plate,
Since I don't need to fill my stomach, I
Will give these coins to that man passing by,
So that hard-working man enjoys a day
With the provisions for which they will pay.”
He read my thoughts since he had the perception 695
That God's light gives to certain people's vision.
To him, the secret thoughts would all appear
Just like the lamp's glass—bright and crystal clear.
From him, no thoughts were hidden; he could reign
As ruler of what people's hearts contain.
Under his breath he muttered to what I
Had thought about in this form of reply:
“You think about the kings in such a way?
If they don't give, how will you eat each day?”
I didn't understand, but my heart shook, 700
Affected sharply by this man's rebuke.
Then, with the grandeur of a lion, he
Put down his load and walked across to me.
The way he put the wood down was so powerful
That all my limbs began right then to tremble.
He said, “O Lord, if You have an elite
Whose prayers are always answered and whose feet
Are blessed, let Your grace now with alchemy
Transform this wood to gold immediately.”
I watched the brushwood turn to gold, amazed. 705
It was as if a massive fire had blazed.
I lost my wits for quite a while and when
I came back to myself through fervour, then
He said, “God, should those great ones be discreet
And fame be shunned by this reserved elite,
Then turn the gold to brushwood now once more
Without delay, just as it was before.”
To brushwood all the gold at once transformed—
I got drunk witnessing what was performed.
He picked the wood up and walked rapidly 710
Towards the town and far away from me.
I wished to follow him with every question

I had that puzzled me, and then to listen,
 But awe of him had shackled both my feet:
 The vulgar can't get close to God's elite,
 But if one does approach, give this instruction:
 "Bow down, for this is due to their attraction."

Consider as a godsend then their guidance,
 If God's friends should admit you near their presence.
 Don't be like one who hears, then suddenly 715
 Falls off the path for nothing, flimsily.
 When out of kindness they let him nearby,
 He will complain, 'It's just an ox's thigh.'
 Liar, it's not an ox's thigh! It has
 Appeared to you as one, for you're an ass.
 This is a royal gift. It is pure grace
 With no ulterior aim or other face.

*Solomon urges the envoys to hasten Belqis's emigration for
 the sake of faith.*

King Solomon in battle had no peer,
 And he attracted Belqis's troops near,
 Saying, 'Come back soon for God's Bounty's ocean, 720
 Has surged and now, dear men, its waves have risen;
 The surges of these waves each moment are
 Scattering more waves to you from afar.
 Welcome, you righteous ones and wait no more,
 For paradise has opened now its door.'
 He added then, 'Head off, dear messengers,
 To Belqis and her faithful followers,
 To say, "Come here as fast as possible
 For *God invites to peace*.* This is for all."
 Come, seeker of felicity! Don't wait 725
 For grace is opening up right now its gate.
 And you who're not a seeker, hurry too—
 This friend will help you find the urge in you.'

*The reason for Ebrahim Ebn-e Adham's migration and
relinquishing the kingdom of Khorasan.*

Like Ebn-e Adham, break up rapidly
This kingdom, and thus gain eternity!
One night while he was sleeping on his throne
Guards on his rooftop made their presence known.
By having guards, this king's aim wasn't to
Ward off all rogues and burglars, for he knew
That the just man is always free from harm 730
And in his heart he feels secure and calm.
Justice is thus protector of delight,
Not guards who beat their sticks throughout the night.
His aim in listening to these lute sounds rather
Was to hear God's speech to His ardent lover:
The clarion's blasts and banging on the drum
Evoke the trumpet of that world to some.
Theosophers say, 'These tunes reach our ears
Directly from the turning of the spheres,
And all the songs men sing and lutes they play 735
Are the spheres' turning sounds which come our way.'
The faithful say, 'It's heaven's influence
That makes harsh noises beautiful at once.
We were all parts of Adam, and back then
We heard those tunes which now we hear again.
Now inside earthly forms, we're doubting it,
But we still can remember them a bit.'

It's mixed now with the dust of earthly grief—
How can that music give the same relief?
Pure water mixed with urine and pollution 740
Becomes an acrid and most foul solution.
Our bodies hold some water, too, no doubt,
Though it be urine, which can put flames out.
When made unclean, water won't lose its power
To put grief's flames out even if they tower.
Sama' is food for God's true devotees,

For it induces union's ecstasies.*
 Music can strengthen mental images
 Which change to forms through music's influences.
 Music intensifies the fire of love, 745
 Like flames in one who dropped nuts from above:

Story about the thirsty man who, from the top of a walnut tree, would throw down walnuts into a stream within a hollow below without himself going to the water, so that he could hear the sound of splashing as the walnuts fell, and how the sound of the splashing made him as happy as sweet sama' does.

Water filled hollows near a walnut tree,
 From which one thirsty threw down nuts with glee.
 The walnuts rained down from the treetop where
 He'd climbed up—he heard splashes form down there.
 A knowledgeable man said, 'Stop it! Cease!
 The walnuts only make your thirst increase.
 The harder walnuts are thrown down that way,
 The further that they will be borne away.
 When you come down from there it will be clear. 750
 The stream will then have borne them far from here.'
 The thrower said, 'These nuts aren't my objectives.
 Observe beyond appearance new perspectives.
 The splashing sound is what I want to hear,
 And I want surface ripples to appear.'
 In this world what do thirsty men desire?
 To circle pools forever and not tire:
 To circle streams, their water and its sound,
 Just like the Kaaba pilgrims circle round.
 Hosamoddin, Truth's Light, this *Masnavi* 755
 Makes you my actual aim so similarly.
 In both its roots and branches, altogether
 It's yours and you've accepted it, my brother.
 By kings, both good and bad things are accepted;
 When they accept, it is no more rejected.
 If you have planted it, now water it.
 If you've released it, then untangle it.
 My aim's your mystery with this composition.

My aim's your sweet voice with this recitation.
Your voice is God's voice to my loving heart; 760
God won't force lovers to remain apart.

Beyond analogy there is a union
Between God and the soul of every human.
'Human', I said, not 'ghoul'—fit for this role
Are just souls that can tell another soul.
If that's a human, where's humanity?
You just see its rear-end unfortunately.
You've read '*You did not throw when you just threw*,'*
But you're mere body, separate with no clue.
Like Belqis, throw the kingdom's body out 765
For Solomon's sake—leave behind all doubt.
I say, '*God's strength!*'* not for myself, but due
To thoughts in the suspicious person who
Hears what I say and inwardly imagines
Some reasons for denial and suspicions.
By '*God's strength!*' 'I am helpless' is my aim
Since your heart's filled with oppositional blame.
My words stick in my throat, and so I'll stay
Silent—you say what you would like to say.
The reed-flute was once played by a reed-player 770
When suddenly a fart boomed from his chair.
The reed-player turned to his backside and said:
'If you can play it better, go ahead.'
While on the mystic path, please realize
You must bear what's ill-mannered to your eyes.
If you see someone who complains forever:
'So-and-so has bad traits and a bad temper,'
Count that complainant as himself ill-mannered
For he speaks ill of someone else bad-tempered.
Good men are unassuming and forbearing 775
Of every brother's temper and shortcoming.
The shaikh's complaint, though, comes from God's command,
Not finding fault, desire, or rage that's fanned.
That's not complaint, but to reform your soul
Like that of prophets carrying out that role.

The Lord commanded their intolerance;
 If not their kindness would bear insolence.
 Forbearance killed their low selves long ago;
 God ordered the intolerance they show.
 Solomon, show God's clemency to crows 780
 And falcons both, all birds, both friends and foes.
 Your clemency won scores like Belqis there—
 'Guide my folk! They don't understand,'* your prayer.

*Solomon sends a threat to Belqis, saying: 'Don't think of persisting
 in polytheism. Don't delay!'*

'Come, Belqis, or it will turn out so badly.
 You'll face a huge revolt from your own army.
 Your chamberlain will break your gate apart.
 Your soul will then become your foe at heart.
 All atoms are God's army—you will see
 When you investigate this carefully.'

You've seen how wind spilled all the Aad folk's blood, 785
 And what mere water managed with the Flood,
 And how waves struck at Pharaoh with such hate,
 And what the earth displayed through Korah's fate,
 And what mere birds did to that elephant,*
 And how the gnat ate Nimrod's skull, how stunned
 Men were when Prophet David hurled one stone
 That toppled a huge foe all on its own,
 While on the foes of Lot stones once rained down,
 Driving them in black water's depths to drown.
 And then there's rational help I could relate 790
 Prophets received from what's inanimate.
 But then *The Masnavi* would stretch too long
 For forty camels: their backs aren't that strong.
 Against the infidels hands testify
 As God's troops, for on that day they can't lie.
 Your learning leads you to oppose God—here
 You are among His army, so feel fear:
 Each limb of yours is from His troops—though they

Obey you now, they're being false today.
If He tells your eyes, 'Give him pain!' then you 795
Will feel severe eye pain without ado.
If He tells your teeth, 'Make him ill!' you'll feel
Your teeth soon make you suffer pain so real.
Open your textbook's chapter on disease;
Read what the bodily troops can do with ease.
He is the soul of everything in sight—
How can His enmity be something light?

'Leave demons and the jinn alone instead—
They rout foes' troops for me!' Solomon said.
Relinquish, Belqis, first your monarchy, 800
Then find me—you'll then gain all sovereignty.
And when you reach me you will then find out
Without me you were just a form sketched out.'

Even a sultan's sketch upon a wall
Is just a form without a soul at all.
And its adornment is for others' gain;
Its eyes and mouth are open, but in vain.
You've wasted your life on what doesn't matter
And you can't tell yourself now from another.
You stop at every form you see, to say: 805
'I am this.' No, by God, you're not. No way!
If you withdraw from people for one moment,
You fill with grief, anxiety, and torment.
When you are That One, you can't be just body.
You're drunk then through yourself and truly lovely.
You're your own hunting bird, prey, and the snare;
You're your own rooftop, rug, and special chair.
An essence is completely independent;
From them all accidents emerge, dependent.
If born of Adam, sit now like that first king 810
And see within yourself all of your offspring.
What's in the jar that's not found in the river?
What's in the house that's not in cities ever?

The world's the jar, the heart's the river clearly;
 The world's one room, the heart a marvellous city.

*Solomon declares, 'My effort concerning our faith is purely on
 God's command. There isn't the slightest self-interest in me
 concerning you, your beauty, and your kingdom. You'll see for
 yourself when your inner eye is opened with the Light of God.'*

'Come, for I am a Prophet with a call.
 Like death, I slay lust; I've fled its control.
 I rule lust, if there is some still in place,
 Not captive to lust for an idol's face.
 My roots are steeped in smashing them—I am 815
 Like idol-smashing Prophet Abraham.
 If I go to an idol's temple, it
 Prostrates to worship me, not I to it.'

The Prophet and Bu Jahl in one instance
 Both stood in one, but their acts had much difference:
 Bu Jahl bowed to the idols on display;
 They bowed before Mohammad straight away.
 The world of lust's an idol temple where
 Both infidels and Prophets live, but there
 Lust is the slave for every holy one— 820
 Unlike mere alloy, pure gold doesn't burn.
 The holy are pure gold, the infidel
 Is false coin—both are in the crucible.
 The latter turns black once it enters here;
 The former's goldenness is made more clear.
 Pure gold will gladly throw its limbs in there;
 Its veins smile in the fire without a care.
 Our body veils us from the people's vision;
 Hidden beneath mere straw, we are an ocean.
 Don't look at faith's king as mere bodily clay— 825
 That's what accursed Satan did that day.*
 How can one smear the lofty sun with just
 A handful of your mud? If you pour dust
 And ashes now on top of shining light,

It will still rise through them before your sight.
What's straw to cover water? What's mere clay
To cover up a single solar ray?
Rise Belqis and her kind like Ebn-e Adham,
Scatter the smoke of this most transient kingdom!

Remainder of the Story of Ebrahim Ebn-e Adham.

That man of good repute while on his throne 830
Heard banging on his roof one night alone:
Loud footsteps from the roof of his great palace.
He thought, 'Who has the gall now to attempt this?'
He shouted through the window, 'Who's up there?
Is it a ghost, since humans wouldn't dare?'
A wondrous group brought their heads to his sight:
'We're going all around to search tonight.'
'What are you seeking?' 'Camels,' they replied.
'Camels on roofs? Why have you even tried?'
They snapped back, 'Why seek God while you still sit 835
On a grand throne? That's mad too, isn't it?'
He wasn't seen again. That was it. Closed.
He vanished from all people like a ghost,
While from the people his true nature then
Was veiled—just cloak and beard were seen by men.
On leaving everybody's vision, he
Became just like the phoenix, legendary:
The soul of every bird that's risen to
Mount Qaf draws from all praises that are due.

Once this light from the East had reached her nation, 840
Belqis and all her men made a commotion.
All the dead spirits took wing suddenly:
They peeked out of the body's grave to see
And gave each other good news, 'Now a call
Is coming from the sky above us all.'
That call makes faiths grow that before were lean
And the heart's branch and leaf transform to green.
Like Resurrection's blast, Solomon's breath

Freed all the corpses from the grave of death.
 After this, may felicity reach you, 845
 Solomon. It has passed. *God knows what's true.*

The remainder of the story about the People of Sheba and the advice and guidance Solomon gave to them, for each one something appropriate for him and his difficulties with faith and the heart, and how Solomon hunted each kind of intellectual bird with the whistle and bait appropriate for it.

I'll speak with force about the Sheba nation:
 When His fine breeze came to the tulip garden
People attained their union on that day;
Children went to their source then straight away.
Secret love's group among groups is like kindness
Surrounded by the censure caused by sickness.
Bodies give spirits what they have of baseness;
Spirits give bodies what they have of greatness.
O lovers, this sought draught of love's for you. 850
You will endure—Eternity's yours, too.
Forgetful ones, arise and love. This is
*Joseph's scent, so inhale it and feel bliss.**
 You know bird-speech, so share with us the song
 Of every single bird that comes along.
 God sent you to the birds and so He taught
 The song of every bird, which you had sought.
 Tell the determinist bird of that notion;
 Speak patience to the bird whose wings are broken.
 Maintain the patient bird both safe and cheerful. 855
 Describe Qaf to the Anqa—it's not fearful.
 And warn the pigeon of the hawk, then talk
 About peace and forbearance to the hawk.
 As for the bat that is deprived of sight,
 Help it become familiar with the light.
 Teach peace now to the partridge, that warmonger,
 And show dawn's indications to the rooster.
 From hoopoe to the eagle similarly
 Please show the way. *God knows best, doesn't he?*

Belqis becomes liberated from the kingdom and drunk with longing for belief, and the attention of her aspiration becomes severed from all of creation at the moment of her migration, except for from her throne.

Solomon whistled to the birds of Sheba 860
 And captured all of them at once, all eager,
 Except those not possessing any heart,
 Or soul, or thought, deaf and dumb from the start.
 I'm wrong for if the deaf one should submit
 To God's speech, He'll give hearing then to it.
 Belqis resolved with heart and soul at last,
 Regretting time she'd wasted in the past.
 She gave her wealth and kingdom up the same
 As lovers who shun honour and good name.
 The slaves she'd had, and all the fine handmaidens 865
 Now seemed in her eyes like some rotten onions.
 Palaces, orchards, rivers all around
 Now seemed like trash heaps due to love she'd found.
 Love overwhelms and even makes the lovely,
 Through its dismissiveness, appear so ugly.
 God's jealousy makes emeralds appear
 Like leeks—negation's meaning is thus clear.
 It is '*There is no God but He*'* that can
 Make the full moon appear like a mere pan.
 Sheba's queen missed no wealth and no possession 870
 Except for her throne—that's the sole exception.
 Solomon realized then what she'd tried
 To hide, since his heart had a route inside—
 Someone who hears the voice of ants can hear
 The secret groans of people who aren't near.
 One who perceives what '*One ant said*'* can tell
 The ancient heavens' secrets just as well.
 From distance he saw that the one now known
 For her submission longed still for her throne.
 It would take far too long now to explain 875
 Why she still loved the throne from her past reign.
 The writer's pen might be inanimate

Unlike him, but it's his associate,
 And every tool belonging to the craftsman
 Is an inanimate friend of that person.

I would have told the reason with precision,
 But fog now clouds your eyes of comprehension.
 Transporting that throne to her new abode
 Was not an option for that huge a load.
 Too risky to attempt to take apart, 880
 Its parts were joined just like a body part.
 Solomon said, 'Although to me it's known
 She'll in the end lose feelings for that throne,
 For when the soul shows it has turned so fair
 Through union, then the body can't compare;
 And when the pearl is captured from the ocean,
 One then sees foam and twigs with much revulsion;
 And when the sparkling sun should raise its head
 Who'd settle then for Scorpio's stars instead?
 Despite all this, we have to seek for now 885
 A way to have it moved here anyhow,
 So she won't feel deprived when we next meet,
 At peace like children with their yearned-for treat.
 For us it's trivial, but to her it's dear—
 Admit the bad to join the good ones here.
 That throne will then remind her of her roots,
 As Ayaz used his old cloak and old boots,*
 So that flawed one remembers still her past,
 From where she came to where she's reached at last.'

God also keeps before our eyes each day 890
 Our origin of semen, flesh, and clay:
 'Where did I bring you from, you whose intentions
 Are so bad that you now raise your objections?
 You used to be a lover of that place,
 Denying talk about this present grace.
 This grace here is your past denial's rebuttal,
 What you would claim when clay still and not rational.

The proof against it is your transformation,
But medicine's made you a sicker person!
How could an earthly form start contemplating, 895
And semen start denying things and hating?
You lacked both heart and soul then, and so you
Denied reflection and rejection too.
From that inert state your denying began,
And you were resurrected as a man.'
It is like knocking on a door to hear
That owner claim, 'The owner isn't here.'
'Isn't' means really 'is' here if you're looking
For that same person, so you won't stop knocking.
Your past denying serves to make so obvious 900
That from inert things He can raise what's wondrous.
So much was done until from the terrestrial
Through '*has there come a time?*'* emerged denial.
Water and clay would say, 'There's no denying!'
And they'd shout, 'Nor informing!' while informing!
I'd like to show this in a hundred ways
But brains can't follow subtle speech's ways.

Solomon solves the problem of bringing Belqis's throne from Sheba.

A ghoul claimed, 'I will conjure it right now
Before you leave this place, if you allow.'
Asaf said, 'Using God's Most Powerful Name, 905
I'll fetch it here for you if that's your aim.'
The ghoul had mastered sorcery, no doubt,
But Asaf's speech's breath brought it about:
That very moment Belqis's throne came
Through Asaf, not the ghoul with his big claim.
Solomon said, 'Praise be to God for this
And countless other miracles of His.'
Solomon looked then at the throne with glee
And said, 'You're a fool-catcher, former tree!'
How many fools bow down their heads before 910
What's carved from stone or wood and nothing more.
Clueless about the soul, the fool detects
Movement inside him, some most slight effects:

He has perceived while drunk and stupefied
 That stones speak and instruct. His mind has lied,
 Playing in wrong locations worship's game
 He deems a real and a stone lion the same.
 The lion that's actually real throws him a bone
 Nonetheless from munificence alone,
 Saying, 'Although that dog is flawed, my kindness 915
 Gives bone-like gifts to everyone regardless.'

*Story about how Halima asked idols for help when she lost
 Mohammad whom she had been meaning and how the idols trembled
 and prostrated and bore witness to the magnificence of Mohammad's
 mission.*

I'll tell you of Halima's mystery
 So her tale can reveal your misery.
 She parted young Mohammad from her breast,
 Holding him like a flower that's caressed
 So he would be untouched by any bother,
 So she might take this king to his grandfather.
 While bringing what had been entrusted, fear
 Led her towards the Kaaba, and once near
 She heard a voice shout: 'Kaaba's wall, a sun 920
 That is magnificent chose you and shone
 Its light on you—there comes to you today
 From that Most Generous Sun ray after ray.
 Today a king, who has great fortune too,
 Will bring each kind of trapping here for you.
 Today, without doubt, you'll become once more
 The station for exalted souls that soar.
 Souls of the holy now will come to you
 From all around, drunken with passion too.'
 This shouting made Halima lose her mind; 925
 Nobody was in front, no one behind;
 Nothing in any of the six directions
 But all this shouting had no interruptions
 Nor pause. She put Mohammad on the ground
 And sought the shouting's source from all around.
 She sought it everywhere and then, with pleas,

Cried, 'Where's the king who speaks such mysteries?
For such a loud shout comes from all around,
So, Lord, please tell me where its source is found.'
She didn't see a soul—inevitably 930
This made her shake like branches on a tree.
She went back to that child with holy grace,
But couldn't find Mohammad in his place.
Her heart grew more bewildered than before;
Her world turned dark through all the grief she bore.
She ran to houses and made a commotion:
'Who's taken that unique pearl from the ocean?'
The Meccans answered, 'We were not aware
That you had even left a child back there.'
She wept and moaned so much then, mesmerized, 935
That others wept because they sympathized.
Beating her breast she wept so movingly
This made the others weep in sympathy.

*Story about the old Bedouin who directed Halima to seek help from
the idols.*

An old man with a cane approached the screamer
And asked, 'What's happened now to you, Halima,
That you have stoked a fire inside your heart
And burned it with laments? How did this start?'
She said, 'I am Mohammad's foster-mother,
Trusted to take him back to his grandfather.
I made it to the Kaaba, but once there 940
I heard strange voices sounding in the air,
And when I heard like this that awesome sound,
I put the boy that moment on the ground,
So I could see whose voice it was, for it
Was very lovely, fine, and delicate.
I neither found a trace of anyone
Nor did the sound pause for one breath. Not one.
And when from my heart's turmoil I returned
I couldn't find the boy there. My heart burned!'
The man said, 'Daughter, don't you suffer grief. 945
I'll take you to a queen now for relief—

She can tell you that lost child's situation:

She'll tell you how he is and his location.'

Halima said, 'I'd be your sacrifice,

Well-spoken man who seems to me so nice.

Come, show me to that queen that has this vision

Through which she can tell of the child's condition.'

He took her to Ozza: 'This idol's been

Gifted with knowledge of all that's unseen.

Each person finds his lost one thanks to her 950

Once he has hurried here as worshipper.'

He then prostrated to Ozza in prayer:

'Goddess of Arabs, sea of kindness, fair

And generous to us, Ozza, like a saviour,

Rescuing us from snares with every favour,

For which all Arabs feel a debt to you,

So they must do what you tell them to do—

Halima has come here in hope of aid

Beneath your willow branch's soothing shade,

For she has lost a child and feels to blame; 955

Mohammad is that lost child's lovely name.'

All of the idols bowed and made prostration

As soon as they had heard Mohammad's mention.

They said, 'What kind of search is this? Begone!

Mohammad has deposed us. He's the one

By whom we've been reduced to rubble and

Have been stripped of all value in this land.

The covetous saw in us fantasies

Before his coming, but they'll all now cease.

They'll vanish now his court has reached this land: 960

Water rules out ablution using sand.*

Do not stir trouble, old man—leave today!

Mohammad-envy might burn us away.

For God's sake, go before it is too late,

So you don't get burned by the fire of fate.

Why play around now with a dragon's tail—

Do you not know what all this will entail?

This news makes oceans surge up and mines quake

And all the seven heavens start to shake.'

On hearing this from those stone idols, he 965

Dropped his cane on the floor immediately.
Then, trembling due to all that had been happening,
The old man's teeth could be heard loudly chattering.
Just like a naked man in freezing winter
He loudly screamed, 'Disaster!' with a shudder.
Halima saw him in that awful way
And she lost self-control too straight away,
Saying: 'Old man, although I suffer grief,
I am bewildered now beyond belief.
The wind one moment is addressing me, 970
And then the next stone forms are schooling me.
The wind speaks now to me with words and language,
Stone forms then start to teach me some new knowledge.
My child was snatched by those from the Unseen
Who live in heaven and whose wings are green.*
Who should I moan about? To whom complain?
I'm now impassioned, dizzy in my brain.
God's jealousy has closed my lips. I'll say
This much: My child's lost—that's all I'll convey—
If I say any more and not restrain 975
Myself, they'll tie me with a madman's chain.'
The old man said, 'Halima, for this grace
Rejoice and bow in thanks—don't scratch your face.
He won't be lost to you, so don't you fret.
The world will get lost in him once they've met.
Each moment countless guards of his are found
In front of him, behind, and all around.
Didn't you see those idols of renown,
On hearing your child's name, come tumbling down?
This is a wondrous era and so rare— 980
In my long life I've seen none to compare.'

Since stones wept at the news about his mission,
What will it do to sinners—just imagine!
You can't blame stone that people worshipped it—
No one was ever forced to pray to it.
This helpless idol is so terrified—
Imagine how the guilty will be tried?

Abd al-Mottaleb, Mohammad's grandfather, learns about Halima losing Mohammad and searches for him around the city, then weeps by the door of the Kaaba, prays to God, and finds him.

Mohammad's grandfather soon heard about
 Halima's public screams and shouting out,
 Which were so loud that people miles away 985
 Could hear. Abd al-Mottaleb right away
 Perceived what they must mean and he began
 To weep and beat his breast. That frantic man
 In grief went to the Kaaba's door to pray:
 'You who know mysteries of both night and day,
 I don't see in myself the qualities
 Entitling me to know your mysteries,
 Nor any virtue that might give me more
 Chance for acceptance at your fortunate door,
 Or that my lowered head should qualify 990
 For fortune to smile down when I should cry.
 But I did see in that unique pearl's face,
 O Generous One, the traces of Your grace.
 Though from me, he does not resemble me,
 Nor any copper ones—he's alchemy.
 The wonders I have seen in him are vast;
 I've not seen them in others in the past.
 No one could ever properly convey
 The wonders which Your grace has sent his way.
 Since I have seen them all with certain vision, 995
 I know he is a pearl from your deep ocean.
 I also hope he will convince you, so
 Please tell me how he's faring, you who know!'

A shout then came out from within the Kaaba:
 'He now will show his face to you, grandfather.
 He's fortunate to have received our favours
 And he has angels as protecting saviours.
 We make so famous that which is revealed
 Of him, but keep his inner being concealed.

Water and clay was gold originally; 1000
 As goldsmiths we use it for jewellery:
Sometimes a sheath to hold a sword of iron,
 Sometimes a collar for a special lion,
Sometimes balls fixed on top of thrones instead,
 Sometimes the crown that men want on their head.
We love this earth of ours—that's truly meant—
 Since it surrenders and remains content.
Sometimes we manifest a king from it,
 Sometimes we make it crazed by him a bit.
A thousand lovers and beloveds all 1005
 Because of him, while searching, weep and bawl.
This is our work, unnoticed by those who
 Have no deep interest in the work we do,
Though we bestow on earth this fine distinction
 Just as we give food to those fleeing famine.
Earth has the form of dust to normal sight;
 Within it has the attributes of light.
Its form is warring with its inner being,
 Which is a jewel; stone's its low form you're seeing.
Its form says, "We are this and naught besides." 1010
 Its inner being: "Look carefully on all sides."
Its form denies: "There's nothing there inside."
 Its inner being: "We'll show what it's denied."
Its form and inner being war on—the two
 Of course draw succour from what they both do.
We make forms from this sour-faced earth, and we
 Reveal its hidden laughter inwardly:
The earth's in tears with sorrow shown outside;
 A million smiles which none can see still hide.
Revealing secrets is the work we do— 1015
 We bring all hidden matters in plain view.
The thief stays silent to deny of course,
 But law enforcers bring truth out by force.
These earthly forms have stolen all our favour,
 So we make them confess—we make them suffer.
Many great children have been born on earth,
 Mohammad though is of superior worth.
The earth and sky together grew so joyful:

"Such a great king was born from this fine couple!"
 Joy made the sky split open so abruptly; 1020
 His liberty turned earth white as a lily.
 O fine earth, your exterior and interior
 Are warring and they're striking at each other.
 Whoever fights himself for His Lord's pleasure
 Such that his soul opposes scent and colour,
 Their darkness fighting with his light, soon finds
 His soul's sun never sets like other kinds.
 The sky lets people rest their feet on it
 If they have striven for our benefit.
 Your outward form laments because of darkness; 1025
 Your inner being's a garden full of roses.
 His aim's like that of Sufis with sour faces
 Who shun those who would douse their light's last traces;
 Mystics are like the hedgehogs which conceal
 Their pleasure deep behind sharp spines foes feel:
 The orchard's hidden, thorns as clear as day:
 "Enemy thief, stay far away!" they say.
 Hedgehog, your spines stop you from being hurt
 And Sufi-like your head hides in your shirt,
 So rosy-cheeked ones with a thorn's bad nature 1030
 Will not attain a fraction of your pleasure.
 Although your boy is like a child he feeds
 The whole world by providing for their needs.
 Through him we made a world alive and we
 Make heavens slaves who serve him dutifully.
 'Where is he now?' Abd al-Mottaleb said,
 'You who know, tell me which way I should head!'

Abd al-Mottaleb asks where Mohammad is: 'Where can I find him?' An answer comes from inside the Kaaba to tell him where.

A voice reached him from deep inside the Kaaba:
 'The child who is well guided and pure, searcher,
 Is in a certain valley near a tree.' 1035
 The blessed old man set off immediately,
 The Qoraysh* leaders riding by his side,
 Since his forefather was their source of pride.

They all went back to Adam, and today
They were the champions at the feast and fray.
The lineage was his husk, though it had been
Filtered through the best rulers they had seen;
His kernel was beyond the husk, and there
Was naught in this world like it to compare.
None seek the birth of God's light as a proof— 1040
What need does God's robe have for warp and woof?
The plainest robe of honour He bestows
Outshines that of the sun with its bright glows.

Remainder of the story about God's mercy calling Belqis.

Rise, Belqis, see God's kingdom with true vision!
Gather pearls from the shore of God's vast ocean.
Your sisters live in heaven's lofty palace—
Why do you act a queen for just a carcass?
Of all the fine gifts they've gained, do you know
What that Great Sultan opted to bestow?
Why bring out drummers to create a scene, 1045
Proclaiming: 'I'm the grimy bath-stove's queen!'

*Parable about Man's satisfaction with this world and
his world-desiring covetousness and heedlessness of the fortune
of the spiritual ones, who are his kindred and are crying out:
'If only my people would know!'**

A dog saw a blind beggar down an alley
And tore his cloak by biting him so badly.
We're telling a fine tale we've shared before*
To stress the moral point in it once more.
'Your friends are in the mountains,' that man said,
'Right now they're busy hunting there instead.
They hunt up there wild asses they can find,
So why in alleys do you hurt the blind?'

False shaikh, don't try evasive lies again. 1050
Your briny water tempted some blind men:

'They're my disciples and I'm brackish water;
 They drink from me then turn blind not long after.'
 Make yours sweet from that of the mystic ocean—
 Don't make snares from yours for those who lack vision.
 God's lions hunt wild asses—come and see!
 How come you hunt the blind pretentiously?
 What's a wild ass? They block all things from sight
 Since they are brave and drunk with God's pure light.
 They left then died in sheer bewilderment 1055
 After they witnessed this King go and hunt.
 He uses them like dead birds He puts there
 To lure more of their kind towards the snare.
 The dead bird has no choice regarding union:
 '*The heart's between two fingers*'* says tradition.
 Those lured by that dead bird look up to see
 They are the King's prey in reality.
 But those who turn away from it won't ever
 Approach close to the hand of that Great Hunter.
 Each says, 'Don't look at me as if I'm dead—' 1060
 See how He has preserved me here instead.
 Since I was killed by him, I'm not a carcass.
 Just my appearance looks now like I'm lifeless.
 My wings produced my movement previously,
 Now it's the Judge who is controlling me.
 My body's lost the motion that was transient;
 My motion's now from Him, so it is permanent.
 If one moves crookedly in front of me,
 Even a phoenix, I'll kill mercilessly.
 If you're alive, do not see me as dead. 1065
 Slave, see me in the Ruler's hand instead.'
 Jesus revived the dead with holy grace—
 The palm of his Creator's hand's my place.
 Can I stay dead while held in God's own hand?
 Jesus's hand is similar—understand!
 I'm Jesus, but whomever my pure breath
 Gives life to always lives and won't taste death.
 The corpse revived by Jesus did die later—
 Give your life to this Jesus, live forever!
 The staff in my own Moses-like pure hand, 1070

I'm visible, though he's not—understand!
I span the sea for the believers' sake
 Bridge-like, but for vile Pharaoh I'm a snake.
Don't look at just the staff, son, for without
 God's power the staff would not be strong. Don't doubt!
The flood's waves were a staff and they consumed
 Sorcery's followers whose pomp was doomed.
If we should now count all the staffs of God
 We'd tear up Pharaoh's followers' vile fraud,
But leave them there on pastures where they graze 1075
 On sweet, but poisonous grass in their sick ways.
If there weren't Pharaoh and his role as head,
 Where would hell find the fuel with which it's fed?
First fatten it, then kill it as you should,
 O butcher, for in hell the dogs lack food.
If in this world there were no enemy,
 Then people's rage would vanish instantly.
That rage is hell. Enmity is its food
 To live, without which it's killed by the good.
If mercy should remain without wrath here, 1080
 How would a king's perfection be made clear?

Deniers mock the parables we tell
 And explanations of pure men as well.
You also make fun, if that's your desire—
 Corpse, how long now remains till you expire?
Be joyful, lovers, as you beg and pray
 At the same door—it opens up today.
The garlic, herbs, and such each have their plot
 Inside the well-kept garden, do they not?
Each stays inside its bed with its own type 1085
 And then draws moisture so it can grow ripe.
You who are in the saffron bed, be saffron;
 Don't mix with different kinds inside the garden!
Saffron, until you're fully ripe, drink water—
 You'll then become part of the sweetest halva.
Don't ever trespass on the turnip bed,
 For they will not become like you instead.

You're in one bed and they are in another.

'*God's earth is vast*'* is verified by scripture,
Especially that realm the other side—

1090

Demons and spirits all get lost inside.
Imaginings and fancies will all end

In that sea, plain, and mountain there, my friend.
Our plain is like a hair inside the sea

Compared with His vast plains beyond, trust me.
Still water that is hidden is much fresher

And sweeter than the obvious flowing river,
Because within itself, like soul and spirit,
It has a hidden path with feet that move it.

The audience has dozed off, so cut this short,
Stop sketches on the water of this sort.

1095

Arise, Belqis—this market trade's rate's swift,
Shun anyone who is a slow spendthrift.

Arise, Belqis, now that you have free will
Before death takes control, as it soon will.

Death will then pull your ears and give no peace,
So you will run in pain to the police

Although a thief. How long will you steal ass shoes—
If you steal, steal a gem the buyer values.

Your sisters gained the everlasting kind,

1100

Your kingdom though is for the dead and blind.

Happy is she who manages to flee

This kingdom which death ruins totally.

Arise, Belqis, and view the true faith's realm

Ruled by its monarchs—try to be like them.

Sitting inside a garden inwardly,

But one of many comrades outwardly.

The garden goes wherever they should go,

But it's concealed so most men do not know.

The fruit are pleading: 'Eat me!' desperately.

1105

Water of Life has come to say: 'Drink me!'

Without wings, fly around the open heavens

Just like the sun and moon do to your visions.

How will you move? Without feet. You will eat,

Without the need to chew, food that tastes sweet.
 Grief won't attack your boat like a huge whale
 And death won't make you hideously pale.
 You are king, throne, and army—you're all three.
 Both fortunate and good fortune similarly.
 Though fortunate as a king, that fortune parts
 From you and one day finally departs.
 Then you'll be empty-handed and alone,
 So fortunate one, be fortune on your own!
 Mystic, when you are your own fortune, then
 How can good fortune ever leave again?
 How will you lose yourself, O man of wisdom,
 When your identity becomes your kingdom?

1110

*Remainder of the story about Solomon building the Furthest
 Worship-House in Jerusalem* by instruction and divine
 communication from God, from wisdom which He knows and how
 angels, demons, sprites, and humans openly helped.*

Solomon, build God's worship-house today
 For Belqis's troops have begun to pray!
 Once he had laid that future mosque's foundation
 Genies and men helped work on its construction,
 One group with love, others unwillingly
 Like servants doing duties outwardly.
 Men are like demons, chained and dragged as well
 By lust to cultivate then buy and sell.
 This chain is of bewilderment and fear—
 Don't view men as unchained and in the clear.
 It drags them off to earn and hunt, you see,
 Then to the mine of gold, then to the sea.
 It drags them to both good and bad—recite:
*'A cord of palms on her neck'**—that's their plight.
Upon their necks we've placed the cord, and we*
Make it from every human quality.
Among the clean and the unclean, there's none
*Whose neck is spared reports on what they've done.**
 Your lust for bad deeds is fire-like in fervour;
 Only live coals admire the fire's bright colour.

1115

1120

In fire, coal's blackness seems to be concealed,
 But when the fire dies it is soon revealed.
 Your greed turns black coal red—when that greed goes, 1125
 The wicked coal remains and each then knows.
 The coal just looked red briefly due to greed
 And not because it did a righteous deed.
 Greed made your act appear so beautiful;
 When greed left your act stayed dark, miserable.
 Only fools think a fruit is ripe when it
 Has been embellished by the ghouls a bit.
 When their souls try it, in embarrassment
 Their teeth will fail in this experiment.
 Lust made that trap look so good men would drool 1130
 Over unripe fruit—it's due to greed's ghoul.
 Direct your greed to godly deeds, my friend;
 Once greed has gone they'll stay here till the end.
 Good things don't need reflections of some rays
 From others—though they pass, true goodness stays.
 When greed's glow leaves the world's affairs, instead
 What's left is black coal for what once was red.
 Greed can make children play-act, so they will
 Ride make-believe steeds just to feel a thrill,
 But when that feeling gets away from one 1135
 He'll look back and then laugh at what they'd done:
 'What was I doing? Why pretend? What need?'
 Vinegar can seem honey-like with greed.
 What Prophets built had no greed whatsoever—
 That's why it keeps increasing in its splendour.
 Many build worship-houses and yet none
 Of them was ever called 'The Furthest One'.
 The Kaaba's grandeur constantly grows more
 Due to what Abraham did long before.*
 Its bricks are not what make it so superior; 1140
 It's due to lack of greed within its builder.
 Their books are not like other people's pages,
 Neither their worship-places, homes, or wages,
 Nor their chastisement, manners, nor their anger,
 Nor their analogies, speech, nor their slumber.
 Each has a different grandeur that he brings;

Their souls' birds soar up high with different wings.
Thinking about their state makes men's hearts tremble;
For our own actions theirs serve as example.
Their birds lay golden eggs—make no mistake: 1145
Their spirits can see midnight at dawn's break.
Whatever heartfelt words that I should say
In praising them they'd fall short in some way.
So build the Furthest Worship House anew,
For Solomon has come back. Peace to you!

If sprites and demons try to turn away,
Angels will then enslave them right away.
If out of fraud the demons should act wrongly,
The whip, like lightning, strikes their heads most strongly.
Become like Solomon, so demons too 1150
Carry bricks to build palaces for you.
Be Solomon-like, free from false pretence,
So jinn and demons show obedience.
Your heart is like your seal, so take good care
That demons don't entrap it in their snare,
And then, like Solomon, rule over you
With the seal. Watch out! God's peace be with you!
Heart, Solomon's power never did depart;
There's one with power still in your head and heart.
Satan seeks to control you the same way, 1155
But all can't weave fine satin cloth, can they?
They may well move their hands in the same manner,
But they still are apart and greatly differ.

*Story about a poet receiving a gift from the king, which the vizier
called Abo 'l-Hasan multiplied.*

A poet gave a poem to the ruler
In hope of a raised rank and robes of honour.
That kind king gave a thousand coins of gold
With other gifts too precious to be sold.
'This is too small!' the king's vizier then said,
'Give him ten thousand gold coins now instead.

He passed on wisdom—from a king like you 1160
 Even ten thousand gold coins are too few.
 He talked with his king using sophistry
 Until a sum was reached eventually.
 The king then gave ten thousand coins instead
 And robes—Thanks and praise filled the poet's head,
 And he enquired, 'Which man deserves the credit
 For showing to the king that I have merit?'
 'This kind vizier called Hasan was your helper,
 The one with a good heart and fine behaviour.'
 He wrote a poem in his praise and then 1165
 Went on his way back to his home again.
 The king's gifts with no lip nor tongue in ways
 That are well hidden sung that ruler's praise.

After a few years that poet returns in the hope of the same reward, and the king orders a thousand dinars on principle, but his new vizier, who was also called Hasan, tells the king: 'This is too much and we have other expenses and our treasury is empty, and I can satisfy him with one-tenth of that amount.'

After a few years, just like previously
 That poet came in need from poverty.
 He thought, 'In want it's best to try once more
 To go to someone whom I've tried before.
 I have already tested that court where
 A king was generous, so I'll seek help there.'
 'The meaning of "Allah"', Seawayh said, 1170
 'Is that they take their needs to him instead.*'
 Then: 'We have come to have our needs met and
 We've found them here with you, as had been planned.'
 Countless wise ones in pain will weep before
 That One, Unique God, whom all men adore.
 Would any mad buffoon instead attempt this:
 Plead his case to a miser who is helpless?
 If the intelligent had not before
 Found answers why then go to Him once more?
 All of the fish that swim inside the ocean 1175
 And birds up on the peak of the high mountain,

The hunting lion, wolf, and elephant,
 The massive dragon, serpent, and the ant,
 Even the elements: earth, wind, fire, water,
 Find sustenance in Him in spring and winter.
 Each moment he's entreated by the sky:
 'God, do not for a moment pass me by!
 My pillar of support, in your protection
*Folded inside Your hands** is my position.'
 The earth says, 'You who've made me ride this way 1180
 On water, keep me still so I won't sway.'
 All have sewn closed their purses and have heeded
 Words from Him on providing what is needed.
 Every Prophet has got this guarantee:
'Through prayer and patience seek out help from me!'
 Therefore, ask Him and no one else instead:
 The sea gives water, not the dry stream-bed.
 And even if you ask another, He
 Makes that one's hand give to you generously.
 He who makes Korah, through gold, turn away— 1185
 Imagine what He gives if you obey!

In search of gifts, that poet once again
 Headed towards that kindest king of men.
 His own new poem was the poet's stake
 Brought to the king for sustenance's sake.
 Generous ones had already put gold down
 Through kindness, waiting for him to reach town.
 To them a poem's valued precious,ly,
 Especially pearls from the deepest sea.
 Men covet food at first—that's their resort, 1190
 For nourishment is what gives life support.
 They risk their lives for hope and greed; we see
 Struggles to earn, violence, and trickery.
 When a rare one can do without such food
 He loves fame, praising poets who are good,
 So they may give fruit to his personal tree,
 Build pulpits to proclaim his dignity,
 So that through their words news of all his splendour

And generosity may spread like amber;
 God made us in His image: His example 1195
 Is what our qualities take as their model.
 Since the Creator wishes thanks and praise,
 Man also has a liking for such ways,
 Especially mystics with such excellence
 That fills old empty sacks like wind at once.
 The sack gets torn though, if he isn't worthy,
 By falsehood's wind—it can't make things more lovely.
 I haven't just made up this parable—
 Don't deem it nonsense if you're curable.
 The Prophet said this when he heard the question: 1200
 'Why does he get pumped up by adoration?'

The poet took his poem to the king,
 Deeming his kindness undiminishing—
 Kind men die, but their kindness stays the course;
 Happy are those who've ridden on this horse.
 Tyrants died, but their cruelty didn't go—
 Fraudulent, lying souls will suffer woe.
 'Happy the one who left,' the Prophet said,
 'Whose good works lasted on, though he was dead.'
 The kind man died, but not his kindnesses. 1205
 To God, faith and good works aren't valueless.
 The stray one dies, but not his disobedience;
 His soul will not be saved by death's experience.
 Leave this because the poet is now busy;
 He is in huge debt and so needs gold greatly.
 He took his poem to the king once more
 In hope of gifts just like the year before.
 The poem, full of perfect pearls, was lovely.
 He thought last year's gifts would be matched exactly.
 'One thousand,' ordered that king, true to form, 1210
 Because for him this much had been the norm,
 But that most kind vizier of yesteryear
 Had passed away—he was no longer here,
 And now in charge instead was someone new
 Who was a miser and lacked pity too.

That one advised, 'King, we've got costs to count
And for a poet that's a huge amount.
Great one, I'll bring contentment to this poet
By giving him a fortieth fraction of it.'
'But last time he received', some others said, 1215
'Ten thousand coins from our kind king instead.
How can one eat straw after tasting sugar?
How can a former king become a beggar?'
Then the vizier said, 'I'll inflict some pain
That makes him too crushed to expect more gain,
Then if I give him mud from streets he'll try
To snatch it like a flower men would buy.
Leave it to me—this is my expertise
Even if this requestor's hard to please.
He might have strength to fly as high as heaven, 1220
But when he sees me he is bound to soften.'
The king said, 'It's your call, so go ahead,
But make him happy for the praise he said.'
'Leave him and others with high hopes to me
And I'll take full responsibility.'
He made the poet wait then for his pay;
Winter passed and then came the spring's first day—
The poet aged through waiting still in hope;
The suffering made him feel he couldn't cope.
'If there's no gold, then treat me terribly 1225
And I will be your slave once my soul's free:
Waiting has killed me—make me leave at least,
So that my captive soul can be released.'

Once the vizier gave him the fortieth portion;
That poet just stood there in deep reflection:
'Then it was more and it came readily—
This one bloomed late and grew thorns tragically.'
People told him, 'That generous old vizier
Has passed away and now another's here.
Through him those past gifts were all multiplied; 1230
Faulting his gifts was never justified.
He's gone and taken all his kindnesses;

In truth, he's not dead but his kindness is.
 The generous, upright one has gone away;
 The one who flays the poor is here today.
 Take this amount he's given and tonight
 Escape before he tries to pick a fight.
 We used a hundred tricks so you would get
 This much, though you don't know of our work yet.'
 He turned to them and asked, 'Friends, tell me where 1235
 This cruel man has come from, if you're aware,
 And what's the name of this clothes-ripping man?'
 They told him, 'He is also called Hasan.'
 He sighed, 'O Lord, how did these different men
 Possess the same name? Lord, I sigh again!
 From that old Hasan's personally signed decrees
 Countless viziers tried to be kind and please.
 From this Hasan's vile beard we all can make
 A hundred ropes—how much more can one take?
 When a king heeds such ministers, then we 1240
 And his great realm are shamed perpetually.'

*The resemblance of this base vizier's bad recommendation which
 corrupted the king's kindness to that of Pharaoh's vizier, Haman,
 which corrupted Pharaoh's receptivity.*

Pharaoh turned pliant and at peace when he
 Heard God's words come from Moses powerfully.
 The sweetness of those special words alone
 Could make milk suddenly gush out of stone.
 When he consulted Haman, his vizier,
 Whose spiteful nature was so very clear:
 'You've been a ruler up till now,' he'd say,
 'Will fraud make you that old tramp's slave today?'
 These words of his were like a hurtling mass 1245
 Of rocks flung at a building made of glass.
 At once he'd ruin and completely raze
 What Moses's words had built up for days.
 Lust can control your brain, and then it later
 Becomes, while you are travelling, your waylayer:
 If holy men give you advice that's sound,

It will, through cunning, fling that on the ground,
 Saying: 'Beware, this isn't right at all.
 Do not be moved or lose your self-control.'
 Pity the king with such viziers, for hell 1250
 With all its spite will be his home as well.
 Happy the king whose own vizier is one
 Like Asaf, the vizier of Solomon.
 With such a good vizier sat by his side,
 He gets called '*Light upon light*'* far and wide.
 A Solomon-like king and a vizier
 Like Asaf would bring light and perfume near.
 Those Pharaoh-like and Haman-like instead
 Find that misfortune fills them up with dread.
 Then *darkness upon darkness* is the way— 1255
 No wisdom and no fortune for that day.
 In wretches I've seen naught but misery;
 If you've seen more, send greetings please from me.
 The king's the soul and the vizier's the brain:
 Corrupt brains drag them like they have a chain.
 The angel of the intellect has turned
 Like Harut, from whom many demons learned.
 Don't make that intellect vizier—select
 Instead the Universal Intellect.
 If you should make lust your vizier, that day 1260
 Your pure soul will no longer want to pray,
 For lust is greedy and thinks of the present,
 While intellect thinks of the Day of Judgement.
 True intellect can see the end—it knows
 To bear the pain of thorn pricks for the rose
 That does not age nor drop off in the fall—
 May it stay from those who can't smell at all!

*How the demon sat on Solomon's throne and copied his actions.
 Explanation of the difference between the two and how the demon
 called himself Solomon, son of David.*

Though you have intellect, you must select
 Others you can consult with intellect
 As well, because paired intellects spare sorrow 1265

And help you step on heaven's peak tomorrow.
 The demon might claim his name's 'Solomon',
 Gain wealth and rule a nation, and so on,
 But it just saw King Solomon perform—
 His demonhood was traced still from his form.
 Men said, 'This Solomon lacks excellence—
 Between the two there is much difference.
 Distinct like sleep and waking, every man
 Can see they're different like those called "Hasan".'
 'God gave to Ahriman',* the demon said, 1270
 'A lovely form resembling mine instead:
 God gave the demon my form—don't you let
 That one now capture you inside his net.
 If he appears and play-acts, please take caution—
 Don't give his outward form alone attention.'
 The demon told them this as trickery,
 But good hearts witnessed the reality:
 They are discerning; there's no fooling them;
 Their intellect sees every hidden realm.
 No falsehood, sorcery, no fraud nor lies 1275
 Can place a veil to cover these ones' eyes.
 In answer they then all thought inwardly:
 'You're upside-down. You speak misleadingly.
 You'll travel upside-down like this as well;
 O lowest of the low, you'll go to hell.
 Though Solomon became deposed too soon,
 His forehead still shines brighter than the moon.
 Even if you have seized the signet ring,
 You are a hell—a gloomy, awful thing.'

We won't bow our heads to his pomp and show; 1280
 We wouldn't give a foot too since we know.
 And if we do bow down in ignorance,
 A hand will rise up from the ground at once,
 Saying, 'Don't bow down to this wayward one!
 Do not prostrate to this ill-fated one!'
 I would give you a thrilling explanation
 But for God's jealousy and indignation.

Be satisfied with this amount, and then
I will explain more when we meet again.
The demon said he's Solomon—the truth 1285
Is that he masked himself from every youth.
Transcend form, pass beyond names, and then flee
From name and title to reality.
Enquire about his action and abstention
Then seek him through these two things by convention.

*Solomon would enter the Furthest Place of Worship in Jerusalem
every day after its completion to worship and guide worshippers
and those in retreat. Medicinal herbs started to grow in the
place of worship.*

When Solomon came early every day
Inside the Furthest Worship-House to pray,
He saw a new plant there and questioned it:
'Tell me your name and how you benefit.
What are you called? Which medicine are you? 1290
Who do you help? Who do you harm? What's true?'
Then every plant would answer Solomon:
'I give life to this one, death to that one:
Poison to this, sugar to that one though—
'This is my name fate wrote down long ago.'
Knowledge about plants came from Solomon
Down to physicians we depend upon
Who wrote great books on medicine and then
Removed pain from the bodies of sick men.
God taught this medicine through revelation; 1295
Reason and sense can't reach this last dimension.
This lower intellect can't make things new;
It must receive them. It's reliant, too.
Able to learn new science through education,
It must be taught by one with revelation,
Which is the source of skills originally
That intellect acquired eventually.
Have skills been learnt by this lower intellect
Without a teacher's help? Please now reflect.
Though it can split hairs, it can never master 1300

A skill or craft without a guiding tutor.
 If our own intellect were capable,
 You'd know crafts with no teacher's help at all.

*How Cain learnt grave-digging from a crow before there was
 knowledge about grave-digging and graves in the world.*

When first did people's minds begin to know
 Grave-digging, which as trade is ranked so low?
 If Cain knew it, then why did he instead
 At first place Abel's body on its head,
 Saying: 'Where can I put this out of sight?
 Grimy and blood-smeared, it will here cause fright.'

He saw a crow which in its beak was holding 1305

Another crow and looked like it was bolting—
 It swooped down from the air for this intention:
 To teach grave-digging skills by demonstration.
 It scooped up soil first with its talons, so
 It could lay in its grave the other crow.
 It buried it, then placed soil over it.

The crow had knowledge God inspired in it.
 'How small my intellect is!' Cain exclaimed,
 'A crow's more skilled than I am. I'm ashamed.'

On Universal Intellect, God said: 1310

'*The sight did not smerve.*'* Ours looks round instead.
 The light of the elect ones is the former;
 The grave-master for corpses is the latter.
 The soul that flies towards the crows will be
 The one the crows drag to the cemetery:
 Don't run behind the crow-like self—that's backward;
 It leads not to the garden, but the graveyard.

Chase the heart's phoenix, if you must depart
 To Qaf and Furthest Prayer-House of the heart.

Due to your passions, saplings at fast pace 1315

Blossom in the heart's Furthest Worship-Place.
 Give them their due like Solomon before:

Don't stamp on and reject them. Find out more
 Because the various plants make clear to you
 The state of this firm ground that you can't view.

Whether plain reeds or canes that give you sugar,
Plants serve as every soil's true state's translator.
The heart's soil is where thoughts are planted, so
All of the secrets of the heart they'll show.
If I find one who draws true speech, I'll yield 1320
A hundred thousand roses like a field,
But if I find one who's that speech's killer,
Wise words will flee my heart like a chased burglar.

Things move to their attractor's own direction,
And true attraction's not like false attraction;
Sometimes your path's correct, sometimes it's wayward;
The lead's not seen, nor who is pulling forward.
You're a blind steed; your reins are surety—
Observe the pulling, not your reins. Heed me!
If the reins and attractor come to vision, 1325
This world won't stay *the area of delusion*.
If infidels could only see that they
Are chasing dogs in that vile devil's sway,
How could they follow him pathetically?
They would hold back as well assuredly.
If cows knew of the butcher's ways at all,
How could they follow him back to his stall,
Or eat the fodder given and then share
Their milk due to his flattery and hot air?
How could they then digest the fodder after 1330
They find out the whole purpose of the fodder?
Heedlessness is this world's support. Where's fortune
When you run here, but get hit hard for certain:
At first told 'Run!' you get struck in the end.
Donkeys die only in this ruin, friend.
The tasks that you with zeal have taken up
Have all their flaws that moment covered up.
The reason why you toil hard as you do
Is that God has concealed its flaws from you.
It is the same with every pleasing thought: 1335
Its flaws are hidden from you, for if not,
If their appalling flaws were manifest,

Your soul would run *from east to furthest west*.*
 If the regret you feel once it is done
 Were with you at the start, would you have run?
 He hid it from our souls initially,
 So we would do what is our destiny.
 Only when destiny made clear its plan,
 Eyes opened and contrition then began.
 Contrition is a worldly matter, son— 1340
 Abandon it and worship God, the One.
 You will be a repent, if from habit
 You do this, and with more zeal you'll regret it.
 Half of your life will pass in being distracted;
 The other half regretting that you'd acted.
 Take leave of contemplation and distraction
 And seek God, mystic states, and lovelier action.
 If you don't have the lovelier action, say
 Why you repent an act from yesterday.
 Worship, if you do know the path that's good. 1345
 Only then are the bad things understood.
 You have to know what's good to know what's bad—
 Through contrast opposites are seen, young lad.
 If you became unable to stop thinking,
 You also couldn't stop yourself from sinning—
 If so, then why repent it nonetheless?
 Explain whose pulling brings this heedlessness.
 Nobody had distinguished over here
 Impotence without power to make it clear.
 And similarly you're veiled from ever seeing 1350
 A flaw in each desire that you are feeling.
 If the desire's flaw had been shown to you,
 Your soul would have fled from what you pursue.
 If He had shown its flaw to you that day
 No one could have then dragged you to its way.
 You find another action so abhorrent—
 The reason is its flaw is so apparent.
 O Knower of the secret with fine speech,
 Don't hide our bad deeds' flaws from our sight's reach.
 And don't show flaws in a good act, lest we 1355
 Lose all our zeal for this itinerary.

It was due to this habit Solomon
 Went to the worship-house on one bright dawn.
 On these grounds every day he'd walk about
 And see if new plants had begun to sprout.
 The secret of the plants is manifest
 To the pure heart, though hidden from the rest.

The story about the Sufi who was meditating in the rose garden with his head resting lowered on his raised knee, and whose friend told him: 'Lift up your head and take pleasure in the rose garden, the aromatic herbs, the birds, and the signs of God's grace.'

A Sufi seeking God's proximity
 Sat with his head supported by his knee.
 He grew immersed in matters very deep; 1360
 A meddler fumed that he appeared asleep:
 'Why sleep? Look at the vines and trees, the traces
 Of God that can be seen in all such spaces.
 Heed God's command: "Look!"* and lift up your face
 Towards the origin of all this grace!
 He answered, 'Lustful one, the heart's God's place;
 Outward things are just traces of a trace.
 Inside the soul are the real fields and gardens;
 Those outside are like water's mere reflections.
 Images on the water that you see 1365
 Are choppy—water has fragility.
 Real gardens are inside the heart—it's their
 Loveliness's reflection seen out there.
 God wouldn't have called it "realm of delusions"
 If they weren't actually derived reflections;
 They are delusory since they all start
 As mere reflections from the mystic's heart.
 Deluded ones think this reflection's nice
 In the belief that it is paradise—
 Far from the gardens' source I see them run: 1370
 With a mere phantom they are having fun!
 They will all finally see correctly when
 Their heedless sleep ends—what use is it then?
 Inside the graveyard they'll begin to cry

And till the Resurrection they will sigh.
 It's best to die before your own life ends,
 Meaning one's found the vineyard's scent's source, friend.'

Story about the growing of the carob in a corner of the Furthest Place of Worship in Jerusalem and how Solomon grew upset at this once it started to talk to him and told its name and special property.

A new plant rising like an ear of corn
 Was noticed in a nook by Solomon.
 It was a very rare plant, fresh and green, 1375
 And this plant had a brightly dazzling sheen.
 It greeted Solomon who then replied,
 While by its beauty he was stupefied:
 'What's your name? Speak without a tongue!' he said.
 "Carob," this world's best king and greatest head.'
 He asked, 'What is your special quality?'
 'I ruin places that have nurtured me.
 I'm carob, wrecker of your buildings and
 Destroyer of foundations in the land.'
 Solomon quickly understood that now 1380
 The journey would reveal itself somehow:
 'While I'm alive this worship-house won't be
 Damaged at all. I know with certainty.
 How could men try to damage or deface,
 While I'm alive, this Furthest Worship-Place?
 Our worship-place's ruin won't occur
 Till after our deaths. Ponder and concur.
 It is the heart; the body's in prostration
 To it. The carob is its bad companion.'

When love for bad companions grows in you, 1385
 Don't talk with them, but flee without ado.
 Tear it up from its roots, for if it rises
 It tears you up and all your worship-houses.
 Lover, your carob is your own corruption—
 Why, like a child, do you lean to perversion?
 Admit you are a sinner. Don't be scared,

So that the Master's teaching will be shared
 When you say, 'I don't know and want to learn.'
 Honesty's better than a strong concern
 For reputation. Learn from Adam's woe: 1390
 'Lord, we've done wrong!'^{*} he uttered long ago.
 He neither made excuses nor spoke falsely,
 Nor did he try to raise the flag of trickery,
 But Satan quarrelled, 'I once had much fame
 And was revered, but You've put me to shame.
 The dye is Yours and You're the dyer too—
 The source of all our sins and flaws is You.'
 Recite from '*Since, Lord, You led me astray*,'^{*}
 So you won't be a fatalist today.
 Why choose the tree of fatalism still, 1395
 Jumping up there, discarding your free will,
 Like Satan and all of his progeny,
 Talking back to the Lord combatively.
 How can it be against your will to sin
 When all see you with joy go rushing in?
 Under duress does anybody prance?
 While being forced astray would someone dance?
 You fought like twenty men just for its sake
 Though counsellors warned you it was a mistake.
 You said, 'This is the way exclusively. 1400
 Who'd fault me other than a nobody?'
 How can one speak like this and claim duress?
 How can one forced fight for it nonetheless?
 You claimed free will for pleasing things you craved,
 But blame fate for your reasoning that's depraved.
 Those fortunate and in the know can fathom
 Reasoning is Satan's while love comes from Adam.
 Swimming in seas is clever reasoning, friend—
 That swimmer ends up drowning in the end.
 Quit swimming, pride, and your hate-fuelled emotion. 1405
 This isn't a small sea; it is the ocean.
 The huge, deep ocean with no sanctuary
 Can swallow up those small seas easily.
 Love is a ship for the elect ones' voyage;
 It usually saves and rarely causes damage.

Sell cleverness and buy perplexities:

The former guesses while the latter sees.

Before Mohammad, sacrificially

Slay your reasoning, say: '*God suffices me!*'

Don't draw your head back from the ark like Canaan 1410

Whose clever self led him into delusion,

Saying, 'I'll reach the mountain that soars over;

Why should I feel indebted now to Noah?'

How can you not? There is no doubt you should

Since even God expresses gratitude.

When God thanks him, how can it not be due

From our souls to feel very grateful too?

What do you know when envy makes you hateful?

Even God praises him and feels so grateful.

If only Canaan had not learned to swim, 1415

He might have then pinned all his hopes on him.

If he were innocent of scheming too,

He would have sought his mother as boys do.

From God's Friend's hearts he'd have gained revelations

If he'd had less book knowledge through relations.

Compare a book with such light and discover

Your soul from its depths blame you for it, brother.

Transmitted knowledge when the Qotb's breath's present

Is dry ablution while streams are abundant.*

Make yourself simple. Follow the direction. 1420

Through 'foolishness' like this, you'll gain salvation:

Mohammad said, '*In heaven most are fools*'—

Among Mankind he is the king who rules.

With cleverness, your pride and airs abound—

Make yourself foolish, so your heart stays sound.

Not the fool acting wilfully in that fashion,

But that one who's bewildered due to passion,

Like women cutting their own hands—disgrace

Comes from their having been shown Joseph's face.*

Sacrifice reasoning out of love today. 1425

Real intellects are with God anyway:

The wise have sent their intellects up there;

Just idiots stayed away from Him. Beware!

If through bewilderment your brain selects

To leave your head, each hair grows intellects.
Up there the brain's set free from thinking's burdens
And stress; brains there just grow lush fields and gardens.

Hear from the field a subtle point—come near
The garden, for your palm will flourish here.
Abandon on this path all pomp and pride. 1430
Don't move unless there's movement from your guide.
Only a tail moves when its head is still.
That movement's like a scorpion's. It is ill,
Venomous, walking crookedly, blind, ugly,
And he makes ill the ones with a pure body.
If someone's like this in his inner heart
And disposition, beat his head apart!
Pounding his head will benefit him truly,
Since his soul then can flee his body's cruelty.
Take from the madman's hand his weapon too, 1435
So justice will be then content with you,
For he has weapons, but no brain to use—
Bind his hands to stop damage and abuse.

*Explanation that acquisition of knowledge, wealth, and rank by an
ill-natured one becomes the means to disgrace him and is like a
sword that has fallen into the hands of a highwayman.*

Teaching bad-natured men a single word
Is handing to the highwayman a sword.
Better to hand it to a savage than
To teach a thing to such an awful man.
Give the bad-natured knowledge, rank, and fortune,
And it will lead to trouble and misfortune.
Believers must fight wars so they can seize 1440
The spears from hands of wretches such as these.
The madman is his soul, the sword his body—
Seize the sword from that man who's vile and ugly!
A hundred lions cannot cause more damage
Than giving a high office to a savage—
His flaws are hidden, but in such a role,

His strengthened snake will soon rush from its hole.
 Scorpions and snakes will fill the vast plains when
 The ignorant one is made king again.
 If he gains wealth and an esteemed high place, 1445
 He then begins to seek his own disgrace:
 Either he stops bestowing gifts through meanness
 Or in the wrong place he becomes too generous.
 He places his king in the pawn's next square—
 The gifts from fools are like this, so beware!
 When one astray gains power he savours it,
 Thinking it is high rank, though it's a pit.
 He acts as guide, but doesn't know the way.
 His ugly soul burns the whole world away.
 When children on this path act like a master, 1450
 Their followers will suffer much thereafter.
 'Come and I'll show the moon to you!' he'll say,
 Though he has never seen it anyway.
 How can you when you've never spied upon
 Even its image on a lake, raw one!
 Wretches act now as leaders and from fright
 Wise men have hidden their heads out of sight.

*Commentary on 'O you who wrap yourself in your garment'.**

God called Mohammad '*One who wraps about*
Himself his cloak' for this, and said, 'Come out!
 Don't cover your face, don't draw in your head— 1455
 The rest are giddy, but you're wise instead.
 Don't hide from the false claimant's opposition;
 You have the candle of bright revelation.
*Stay up at night,** your candle burning bright,
 Great prince, the candle's active most at night.
 Daytime's night-dark without your radiance there;
 Without your backing, lion falls to hare.
 Captain the ship in purity's great ocean,
 For you're a second Noah; you've been chosen.
 Every path needs a man with expertise 1460
 Who knows the path, especially on seas.
 Look at the waylaid caravan. Arise!

Ghouls captain ships each side you turn your eyes.
Ship-rescuer, you are today's Khezz, so

Don't choose retreat like Jesus long ago.
You're heaven's candle to this group—don't run
Towards retreat, cut off from everyone.

Come to the crowd—it's not time for seclusion.

You are Homa with guidance to Qaf Mountain.

The moon keeps moving steadily in the dark; 1465

Its orbit won't stop just because dogs bark:

Critics are like dogs next to your full moon—

They howl against your rank. You stay immune.

They're deaf towards "*Keep silent!*"* and through folly

They bark at the full moon that is so lofty.

Healer of sick men, don't drop on the floor

The blind's staff, due to deaf men's angry roar.

Didn't you say: "The one who leads the blind

God will reward a hundred times in kind."

If you should lead a blind man forty paces, 1470

You will gain guidance and God's pardon's graces.

Lead from this world that's transient all the blind,

Group after group—don't leave them all behind,

For this is guidance; you're the true guide who

Can turn the final hour's dirge to joy too.

Leader of the God-fearing, cause those men

With fancies to seek certainty again.

If someone schemes against you, I will strike

His neck—proceed with joy the way you like.

Over his blindness I'll place as a cover 1475

More blindness—he'll think poison then is sugar.

Intellects are lit up by My light, while

Plots are informed by My plots and My guile.

How can the felt tent of the Turcoman

Resist the elephant's huge feet, good man?

What is the wind, O Prophet who's most glorious,

To now withstand My wind that's so ferocious?

Arise and blow the trumpet that scares men

So thousands of the dead will rise again.

Angel of Death of your age is your function— 1480

Bring Resurrection prior to Resurrection!

If asked, "What's Resurrection?" you be bold,
 O beauty, show yourself and say, "Behold,
 I'm it, enquirer, victim of affliction.
 A hundred worlds rose from this Resurrection."'

If he's not fit for prayer and *zeker* remembrance,
 The answer for that stupid wretch is silence.
 And when a prayer does not get a reply,
 Silence is the response from God on high.
 It's harvesting time and we are unlucky 1485
 Because the day has almost gone completely.
 Time is short and this discourse's sheer strength
 Can make a lifetime seem too short in length.
 Throwing spears in a narrow lane lets down
 Spear-throwers who have earned worldwide renown.
 Time is short and the people's understanding
 Is shorter still—too short for what I'm offering.
 When silence is the answer wretches earn,
 Why do you talk so much? When will you learn?
 Due to His kindness and most perfect grace 1490
 Moisture and rain head to each barren place.

*A demonstration showing that 'Choosing not to answer is an answer itself' in confirmation of the saying 'Silence is the reply to the wretch'. An explanation of these two sayings is in the story which will be related.**

There was a king once with a slave whose brain
 Was dead, while he had lust he'd not restrain.
 He didn't carry out his job with care;
 Deceptive, he hoped none would notice there.
 The king decreed, 'Reduce his salary,
 And, if he fights, sack him immediately!'
 His intellect was weak, his lust intense—
 So he reacted badly, lacking sense.
 With intellect he would have been more prudent: 1495
 Perceive his error and then be repentant.
 A tethered ass should never lose its temper,

For this makes its condition worse than ever.
It thinks, 'It can't get worse than one leg tied,'
But soon its other leg is also tied.

Explanation of the saying of Mohammad: 'God created the angels and put intellect in them, and He created the animals and put lust into them. He created humans and put both intellect and lust in them, so the human whose intellect prevails over his lust is higher than the angels, while the one whose lust prevails over his intellect is lower than animals.'

Mohammad said that God created three
Types of created beings originally:
The first have wisdom and munificence—
They're angels bowing in obedience.
Their nature's free from lust and craving's blight. 1500
Through love of God they are eternal light.
Another group do not have wisdom: they
Are animals which get fat eating hay.
They see just hay and stables, unaware
Of wretchedness and honour to compare.
The third group are the humans, and our masses
Are all of them half-angels and half-asses.
The latter half leans to what's low and base,
The former to what's wise and filled with grace.
The first two don't have inner conflict's torments, 1505
But humans suffer from those two opponents.
Humans are also tried by destiny;
In form one, they're divided into three:
The first group's totally submerged inside—
Like Jesus, they have joined the angels' side:
Adam's form, Gabriel's reality—
They've quit rage, lust, and talking pointlessly,
Through their trials, struggles, and renunciations
As if they weren't really born of humans.
The second group have joined the ass instead, 1510
Possessed by lust and with a rage-filled head.
Gabriel's traits had once been shared by these,
But they proved too small for grand qualities.

If you should lose your soul, you will be dead;
 Lose Gabriel's traits and you're the ass you dread.
 Souls lacking Gabriel's qualities are low—
 This talk is true and Sufi greats say so!
 They suffer more than animals can ever;
 In this world they do things that are so clever:
 In scheming and pretence they are accomplished 1515
 Unlike the animals—they're thus distinguished,
 Weaving clothes with fine gold embroidery,
 Fetching pearls from the bottom of the sea,
 Astronomy and science on top of these,
 Knowledge of medicine, philosophies,
 All of which link to this world that they live in
 And have no power to reach the seventh heaven,
 All knowledge useful to construct a stable,
 The life support of every cow and camel.
 These giddy ones call them their 'mysteries', 1520
 Since they prolong the life of beasts like these.
 Knowledge of God's path and His place is known
 By owners of a mystic heart alone.
 In composite form He made in this fashion
 Animals who have knowledge too as ration.
 He called this group of people *cattle-like**
 For how can sleep and waking be alike?
 Animal spirits know just sleep for they
 Inverted their own senses, but that day
 When waking comes and sleep will finally end 1525
 They'll learn all from the Tablet, my dear friend.
 Just like the senses of a sleeping person—
 When he awakes he'll notice their inversion.
 He is *the lowest of the lows**—forget
 And leave him: *do not love the ones that set*,*

Exegesis of the verse: 'As for those in whose hearts is a disease, this book added to their disgrace' and 'He leads many astray by it while also guiding many by it'.**

Since he had the potential to transcend
 From baseness, but he lost it in the end.*

An animal lacks that kind of potential,
 So it's excused of course from being bestial.
 Once he's lost his potential, there's no gain
 For this man—food turns to a donkey's brain.
 If he eats healing herbs, they make him sicker
 Like bad drugs causing stiffness and dementia.
 There is another sort left in the battle—
 They are half rightly guided and half bestial.
 In war all night and day they are immersed,
 The bestial half still battling with the first.

*The battle between intellect and the carnal soul is like the dispute between Majnun and his she-camel: Majnun wants to go towards Layli, but the camel wants to go back to her foal, so Majnun says:
My she-camel's desire's behind, mine here:
That I and her are now at odds is clear.*

Majnun and his she-camel were this way,
 Pulling to different sides all night and day:
 Layli was for Majnun the journey's goal; 1535
 The camel wished to go back to her foal.
 If he grew absent-minded for a moment,
 The she-camel would turn round in that instant.
 Being so filled with love and passion, he
 Often lost self-awareness helplessly.
 Reason is what is watchful all the way;
 Passion for Layli carried that away.
 The she-camel was watchful and so cunning
 The moment she felt her own bridle slackening:
 She'd know his thoughts then floated far away 1540
 And turned back to her foal without delay.
 When he returned to his wits he'd then find,
 From where they were, that she'd gone miles behind.
 Majnun remained for years stuck in such ways,
 Still on a journey that should take three days.
 He said, 'She-camel, since we are both lovers,
 We're opposites who're not good fellow travellers.
 Your love and toggle don't conform with me;

I have to choose some different company.'
 This pair will try to take each other out. 1545
 Souls that will not leave bodies will lose out.
 For God's Throne every soul still has great thirst;
 The body, like the camel, loves thorns first.
 Souls open up their wings and soar so high;
 The body sticks its claws in soil nearby.
 'You'll long for home', Majnun said, 'While still with me
 And this will keep my soul so far from Layli.
 My life's been wasted by such problems falling,
 Like Moses's men in the desert, wandering.
 The path to union was *two steps* away, 1550
 But it's been sixty years due to your sway.
 The path is not that long, but I've been tarrying,
 And I have grown so sick of all this travelling.'

Majnun leapt from the camel in the air:
 'This grief has burned me. How much more is there?'
 The massive desert seemed small to his eye;
 He flung himself on rocky ground nearby:
 He flung himself so fiercely on those stones
 That this brave lover broke a lot of bones.
 And when he flung himself, by destiny, 1555
 As a result his leg broke instantly.
 'In spite of that,' he said while tying it,
 'I'll roll like balls that Layli's bat might hit.'
 That's why Sana'i curses anybody
 Who rides on and does not dismount his body.
 Can love for God be less than love for Layli?
 It's better to become the Lord's ball surely?
 Roll like a ball sincerely just like that
 Across the curve of His love's polo bat,
 Because from now on it's through God's attraction, 1560
 Though camel-riding brought us to this junction.
 And this new kind of travelling is astounding,
 Beyond a human being's understanding.
 And this pull is distinct from any other;
 It is what makes Mohammad so superior.

*That young man writes a complaint to the king about the reduction
of his mages.*

Stop this, resume that young man's tale and bring
 Details about his letter to the king.
 He sent a letter to that nice king, writing
 With anger, hatred, self-conceit, and fighting.
 The body is a letter—look inside 1565
 Before you send it to him. Step aside
 And open it so you can read it all
 And judge if for a king it's suitable.
 If you decide it isn't really fit
 For kings, write it again, correcting it.
 Opening the body's letter isn't easy—
 Otherwise all could read its secret clearly.
 Opening the body is so hard, I'd say
 It's only for the brave—it's not child's play.
 We're all contented with the contents page, 1570
 Steeped in desire and greed, a trap and cage
 For ordinary men who then imagine
 The actual contents must match with precision.
 Open more pages—don't remove your sight
 From these words here: *God knows best what is right.*
 The contents page is what the tongue declares—
 You need to see inside how it compares,
 Whether or not it actually fits,
 So that your acts aren't those of hypocrites.
 If carrying a heavy sack, begin 1575
 By checking first of all what is within,
 To know which sweet and bitter things it's holding,
 Then take it if it's really worth transporting.
 If not, then empty it of rocks and spare
 Yourself the fruitless toil that none should bear,
 Keeping inside the sack just those good things
 That should be taken to the righteous kings.

Story about the jurist with a big turban and that man who snatched it. The jurist shouted: 'Unravel it first to see what you have snatched before you take it away!'

A mullah had collected rags and wound
 Them in his turban's small cloth, round and round,
 So it would look impressively enormous 1580
 When he went to the madrasa vainglorious.
 He had cut strips from clothing, so his turban
 Could be embellished by this secret burden.
 It looked so heavenly from the outside,
 Though it was false and hideous inside.
 Foul animal skin strips and old, plain cotton
 Were buried secretly inside that turban.
 At dawn he went down to the seminary,
 So he might profit from this trickery.
 In a dark lane a clothing thief was waiting 1585
 To use the skills in which he'd had his training.
 He snatched the turban from the mullah's head
 And then as fast as possible he fled.
 The mullah shouted, 'Young man, won't you listen—
 Open it first before you take that turban.
 As you rush like the birds up in the air,
 Unwrap what you have snatched away with care.
 Unravel it and rub it with your hand,
 Then if you want it, I won't reprimand.'
 When that escaping thief unravelled it 1590
 Thousands of tiny rags fell out of it.
 One short old strip was all that was remaining
 Of that huge turban that he had been craving.
 He threw that last piece down immediately:
 'You've put me out of work through trickery!'

The world's advice to worldly people through mystical communication and its display of faithlessness to those who desire it to be faithful.

The mullah said, 'I fooled you, that is true,
 But I had warned you of the matter too.'

The world, though finally blooming, similarly
Cried out about its infidelity.
Existence and corruption are a pairing: 1595
The fraud's the first, the latter is the warning:
Existence says, 'Come here, for I am lovely,'
Corruption, though, says, 'Go, I'm nothing really.'
You who are stunned by spring's exceptional splendour,
Observe the autumn's cold and sickly pallor.
You saw the lovely sun rise—don't forget
The sun's death later at its time to set.
You saw up in the sky the full moon's rays—
Notice its grief too in its waning phase.
A child was loved by men due to his beauty— 1600
Once he had aged, those same men thought him ugly.
Though a slim body makes you now its prey,
It sags like cotton on a later day.
You love devouring those fine delicacies—
Look at the drains filled with their excess grease.
'Where is your loveliness?' they ask the waste,
'Your beauty, scent, and most delicious taste.'
'That was bait; I'm the snare,' the food will say,
'The bait is hidden now you've turned to prey.'
Fingers that were the envy of craft masters 1605
Often end up just trembling due to tremors.
The soul-like, drunken eye that we all find
So lovely ends up streaming tears and blind.
The brave one viewed as lion-like we'll see
Subdued by a small mouse eventually.
The sharp, far-sighted artisan, my friend,
Appears like an old donkey in the end.
The fine locks that spread musk which you inhale
Will end up like a donkey's ugly tail.
Existence pleases us in the first place, 1610
But ends up with corruption and disgrace.
It brought the trap to everybody's view,
Then fooled a simpleton in front of you,
So don't claim, 'Oh, the world has tricked me there,
Or else my brain would have escaped the snare.'
The necklace and the sword-belt made of gold

Become the shackles that entrap and hold.
 Think of each particle like this, my friend:
 As well as its beginning see its end.
 See the end and you'll end up more elated. 1615
 See just this ass-stall world and get deflated.
 At first sight, faces all shine like the moon,
 But see the way they'll all end up too soon,
 So you won't be one-eyed like Satan, brother:
 That blind one saw one half, but not the other.
 He saw no inner faith, just Adam's body;*
 He saw no link beyond, just what is worldly.
 And men surpassing women isn't due
 To having more strength than the women do.
 Lions and elephants would be superior 1620
 If strength and force should be the real criteria.
 Men are superior over women, friends,
 When they remain more focused on the ends.
 The crooked one falls short by his own actions,
 Like women, from the final outcome's visions.

From the world come two cries which are opponents,
 So be alert to which one's heard these moments.
 The first kind will revive the godly, while
 The second will deceive the mean and vile:
 'Once flowers drop, it is the thorn that stays.' 1625
 'I'm really blossom, you with such kind ways!'
 The blossom cries, 'Here is the flower seller!'
 The thorn cries, 'Don't approach me any further!'
 Accept the blossom's you won't heed the other
 For lovers only hear their loved one, brother.
 'Here, I am ready now!' the blossom said,
 The thorn said: 'See my outcome first instead.
 My being ready is a false seduction—
 Look for the ending in the start's reflection.'
 Of the two sacks, once you have entered one 1630
 You're then unfit to reach the other one.
 Happy is he who from the first start hears
 What wise men hear through their own minds and ears.

Corruption settled in those who were empty—
All else appeared corrupt then consequently.
When a new bowl draws urine inside it,
Water can never take the filth from it.
Everything draws another thing on earth,
Unbelief infidels, truth those of worth.
There is both amber and a magnet there: 1635
Iron or straw, you'll end up in a snare.
If iron, then the magnet pulls you near;
If straw, you'll move to amber. It's that clear.
When one is not a friend of the good people,
One will keep company with those who're evil.
To the Egyptians, Moses was the worst;
To Israelites Haman was truly cursed.
Haman's soul drew Egyptians, who would lose,
While Moses's soul drew his fellow Jews.
Straw is for donkeys' stomachs, meanwhile wheat 1640
Is suitable for human beings to eat—
If due to darkness you can't tell, it's easier
To look at who he's taken as his leader,

Explanation that the mystic has nourishment from the Light of God, for Mohammad said, 'I spend the night with my Lord who gives me food and drink,' And his saying, 'Hunger is God's food through which He revives the bodies of His special saints,' which means that God's food reaches them while in a state of hunger.

For all the foals will follow their own mothers,
Which shows what is their species to the others.*
The human's milk is what the breasts bestow,
The donkey's from the udder down below.
It is the justice of God's distribution—
The wonder is there's no force or compulsion.
If there's compulsion there can't be contrition; 1645
There's no defence against enforced oppression.
The lesson is tomorrow, for today
Has ended—mysteries overwhelm one day.

You who depend and trust in the hot air
 And flattery from a wretch should take more care.
 You've raised a tent from bubbles, which is wrong
 Because its ropes are weak and won't last long.
 Falsehood is like a lightning flash so bright
 The traveller on the way will lose his sight.
 This world and worldly men are valueless; 1650
 Both match when it comes to unfaithfulness.
 They're both unfaithful, so when facing you
 It is the back of their necks that you view.
 The spiritual, like that world, are eternally
 Faithful to their oaths due to their true piety.
 When did two Prophets ever come to blows
 Or claim each other's miracles as foes?
 Fruit from that world will not turn bad tomorrow;
 The joy from wisdom never turns to sorrow.
 The low self should be killed for it lacks promise. 1655
 That self is low and prays towards vile baseness.
 The low self matches perfectly the worldly
 Just as the shroud and grave fit the dead body.

The self is clever, sees flaws everywhere.
 It's dead while facing this world deep in prayer.
 But when God's inspiration's flow arrives
 Like water, then a living thing revives.
 Until that comes, do not be duped—take colour
 Only from Him whose rouge will last forever.
 Seek fame that never fades and choose the ray 1660
 Of sunshine that won't set each passing day.
 Refined skills and fine speech are Pharaoh's soldiers,
 While death's appointed hour is the Nile's waters:
 Although their splendour, pomp, and sorcery
 Draw men to crane their necks so they can see,
 Deem them all the magician's tricks that break,
 While death's the wood that turns into a snake:
 It turned all of that magic to one bite;
 The day arrived and it consumed the night,
 But that consumption didn't add one ray 1665

To light—that stayed exactly the same way.
The light’s effect, not essence, grew on shining;
Essences aren’t increasing or declining—
Through His creating, God did not grow more;
He isn’t now what He was not before.
But the effects grew more through His creation;
Between these two types there’s a clear distinction.
Growth of effects is God’s own self-display
Of attributes and how He works away.
But if an essence grows, that’s evidence 1670
Of its being prone to change and transience.

*Exegesis of ‘Moses sensed a fear in his soul and We said: “Don’t feel
fear for you are superior!”’**

Moses said, ‘Sorcery as well can stun—
What should I do when this lot can’t discern?’
God said, ‘I shall bring forth discernment’s light
And make the brains that lack it now gain sight.
Though they raise up foam like the ocean here,
Moses, you shall prevail, so have no fear.’

Sorcery had prestige back in his day—
Staff turned to snake and they lost straight away. 1675
Beauty and grace are both claimed by all men,
But death’s their touchstone, so just wait till then.
Magic went, Moses’s miracles as well;
Toppled from being’s rooftop, all bowls fell.
Curses are the sole sound from magic’s bowl;
Faith’s bowl’s high rank lasts due to its good role.
The touchstone has been hidden long from most,
So come fake coin among the real and boast:
It’s time to brag now that the touchstone’s absent—
They’ll pass you hand to hand like a prized present.
The counterfeit will say through haughtiness: 1680
‘Pure gold, I’m like you—how should I be less?’
Real gold says, ‘Fellow servant, now we’ve shared,

But soon the touchstone comes, so be prepared.'
 To mystics bodily death's a gift. They're bold
 Because what harm can scissors do to gold?
 If false coin saw within on the first day
 Its end, it would have turned black straight away;
 If it had been black at the first encounter,
 It wouldn't have been such a false pretender.
 It could have sought pure grace's alchemy; 1685
 Wisdom would have removed hypocrisy.
 It would have then been broken and not later;
 It would have then discovered the repairer.
 Becoming broken after seeing its end,
 It would have passed then to one who can mend.
 Grace drives the copper to the alchemy;
 Gold-plated coin's denied contrastingly.
 Gold-plated coin, don't make claims. Keep in mind
 That customers will not remain so blind:
 The Last Day's light will give sight to their eyes, 1690
 Exposing all your hoodwinking and lies.
 Those who have seen the outcome make souls sigh
 In longing; they're the envy of each eye.
 To those who see just what's immediate
 And are corrupt within, the doors are shut.
 Between dawn and false dawn no difference
 Is noticed by those plagued by ignorance.
 False dawn has driven every caravan
 Towards destruction's howling winds, young man.
 For every coin a false coin can be shown, 1695
 So pity souls with no tools or touchstone.

*Prohibiting the false claimant from pretence and commanding him
to follow guidance.*

'I am Mohammad,' Bu Mosaylem* said,
 'I've ruined his religion with my head.'
 'Don't brag, deluded by the start!' you tell him.
 'Look at the final outcome, Bu Mosaylem.'
 Don't act as guide to gain wealth out of greed.

Follow behind and let the candle lead.
Just like the moon, it shows the destination,
And if there's bait or snare at each location.
In any case it's only with the lanterns 1700
That you can tell a crow's form from a falcon's,
Seeing as these crows began the fraud and lies—
They even imitate white falcon cries.
If someone learns the hoopoe's cry, what damage
Will harm the secrets passed in Sheba's message?
Discern the natural from the false cry, tell
The kings' crowns from the hoopoe's crown as well.
Shameless people have stolen adages
And sayings from the mystic dervishes.
Those ancient nations* were destroyed for good, 1705
For thinking timber was prized sandalwood.
They had discernment, but they lost their mind,
For greed and lust makes people deaf and blind.
The physically blind still deserve God's mercy,
Greed's blindness though does not deserve our pity.
The hangman of the king's forgivable,
But jealous killers are too terrible.
Observe the ending; watch out for the hook.
Greed won't let your far-sighted eye now look.
With two eyes see what's last and what comes first. 1710
Don't be one-eyed like Satan, who was cursed.*
One-eyed men see what is immediate only,
Clueless like beasts about what follows shortly:
A cow's two eyes are worth one human eye
In the religious laws, which nullify
Their value—they're worth half since they both need
One of their human rider's eyes to lead.
Destroy a human eye and laws dictate
Half of his life's blood-price to compensate,
For human eyes are independent, free 1715
From need for others' eyes and company.
The donkey's eyes see just the start, my friend;
They're deemed one-eyed for they don't see the end.
This talk could go on, but that feeble weakling
Out of desire for food has started scribbling:

*Remainder of the story about that young man writing a letter to
request a wage.*

That poet met the kitchen head to say
 'Miser of the king's kitchen, it's some way
 Beneath him for this matter that I mention
 About my wage to have reached his attention.'
 The kitchen head: 'It's his decree no less, 1720
 And not from miserly tight-fistedness.'
 He said, 'By God, this is just tale-spinning—
 Even rare gold has dust's worth to this king.'
 The kitchen head showed proofs so he'd take heed,
 But he rejected them all due to greed,
 And when that afternoon his pay was cut,
 He cursed to no avail, disconsolate.
 'You're doing this on purpose!' he then cried.
 'No, by the king's command our hands are tied.
 This comes straight from the source, so understand 1725
 The arrow is released by his own hand.'
 '*You did not throw when you threw*'* is a test;
 Don't blame the Prophet. God did it. It's blessed.
 Enraged one, from the source the water's murky—
 Open your eyes, look at the water closely!
 Due to his grief and rage that servant went
 To write a letter in which he could vent,
 But in this letter he expressed much praise
 For the king, threading pearls in skilful ways:
 'Your hand is greater than the clouds and sea 1730
 In meeting needs and solving poverty;
 The cloud gives just while weeping, but for free
 Your hands lay feasts with smiles continually.'
 It was praise on the surface, but his rage
 Came through like a bad smell from every page.

Your actions are devoid of light and ugly,
 For you have lost all your innate light sadly.
 Just as fresh fruit rots in a week or less

The good acts of vile men turn valueless.
The splendour of the world, too, fades away, 1735
For it's from this corrupt world of decay.
When the one praising feels much spite inside
His praise won't fill a breast with joy and pride.
Heart, cleanse yourself of spite and hatred! Say:
'Praise be to God!' Get busy straight away.
Your tongue is uttering just pretence and fraud
If hatred hides within while you praise God.
God has said, 'I don't look at the outside
Appearance, but instead at what's inside.'

*Story about the praiser who thanked his object of praise to keep his
reputation, but the whiff of his inward grief and sorrow and the
raggedness of his outward garb showed that those thanks were lies
and pretence.*

Wearing a rough cloak once a man came back 1740
And friends asked of his time spent in Iraq.
He said, 'Yes, exile was so tough, but it
Helped me gain blessings and much benefit.
The caliph gave me robes of honour there—
May praises follow that man everywhere!
He kept repeating thanks and praise this way,
So they believed he'd gone too far that day
And said, 'Your awful state before our eyes
Is proof to us that all your words are lies.
Bareheaded, almost naked and so broken, 1745
These thanks are either memorized or stolen.
Where is the proof that all your praise is fair
On your head and your feet, which are now bare?
Your tongue may praise that king without restraint,
But all your body parts express complaint.
In that king's generosity to you
Was there no pair of trousers or a shoe?'
'I passed to others what he gave,' he claimed,
'For falling short that ruler can't be blamed.
I took all of that ruler's generous presents 1750

And gave them to the orphans and poor peasants.
 I gained long life by giving wealth away,
 Rewarded for I gambled all away.'
 They said, 'Congratulations now seem due.
 The wealth has gone, but what's this stench in you?
 There is inside you so much thorn-like hating—
 How can grief be the sign of celebrating?
 Where are the signs of love and charity
 If what you now claim is reality?
 The wealth has gone, but where's the new strong ardour? 1755
 If a flood passed, where are the signs of water?
 Your eyes were dark and soul-expanding too,
 But now they're not—why are they deathly blue?
 Where is the sign you gambled self away?
 Shut up! We sniff false claims in what you say.
 Charity shows a hundred signs in fact
 And they are also shown by each good act.
 If you give wealth in charity, it's true
 That in return come rebirths inside you.
 Who's cultivated God's land with good deeds 1760
 And not gained profit, left with obvious needs?
 For if God's gardens don't grow one corn ear
 How can *God's earth be vast*?* We want to hear.
 The transient world does not lack crops that sprout—
 How can God's vaster earth then be without?
 The latter's crops will last for evermore;
 Each seed produces seven hundred more.
 You praised, but where's the praiser's sign to view?
 There's no trace outside and none inside you.'

The mystic's praise of God is true, for his 1765
 Hands and feet even act as witnesses.
 It raised him from the body's pit, and bail
 Arrived to free him from this earthly gaol.
 Praise's sign's on his shoulders visibly,
 Intimacy's light, silk of piety.
 Having escaped the transient world, he's living
 In the rose garden with *the spring that's gushing*.*

This lofty mystic's ranking, seat, and station
Are all the throne of souls with aspiration,
Fidelity's seat where God's Friends are placed, 1770
Where all are blooming, joyful, and fresh-faced.
Like the rose garden's praise of spring, their praise
Shows up in numerous signs and other ways:
The proofs are rose beds, herbs, springs, and palm trees,
And lovely scenery each person sees,
Thousands of witnesses in each direction
Like the pearl in the shell deep in the ocean.
Through your foul breath one smells your bad soul's trace
And your grief, boaster, shines across your face.
Those sensitive to such smells recognize, 1775
So stop pretending with ecstatic cries.
Don't boast of musk when your breath's onion smell
Reveals the secret truth so all can tell.
You claim, 'I've had rose candy', but that stink
Of garlic says, 'That's nonsense, don't you think?'

The heart is like a house: despite its size
Surrounding houses hide it from our eyes.
A few men see the secrets, and not all,
Through window slits and cracks within the wall,
Despite the fact the owner's not aware 1780
Of them and in this knowledge lacks a share.
The scripture says, 'The Devil and his evil
Followers smelt the hidden state of people
Through means about which most have been oblivious,
Since it's not part of this world of the senses.'*
Don't try fraud near detectives seeking it.
Don't boast to touchstones, O base counterfeit.
This touchstone has a way to tell apart
True from false; God made him chief of the heart.
The devils with their kinds of thuggishness 1785
Can read our thoughts and secrets nonetheless
And have a route inside for robbery:
We are thrown headlong by them tragically.
Each moment they cause damage and mishaps,

For they have tunnels and small window gaps—
 Why then should the enlightened souls not see
 Men's hidden states as well so easily?
 Have spirits who have pitched their tents in heaven
 Less power than devils have in penetration?
 The Devil heads to heaven like a robber 1790
 And he becomes speared by a burning meteor.
 He falls headlong from heaven the same way
 A wretch is speared in war from far away.
 Possessiveness of spirits whom all love
 Throws down the devils headlong from above.
 If you are paralysed, lame, deaf, and blind,
 Don't think less of the spirits of this kind.
 Stop bragging, feel ashamed, and realize
 Beyond the body there are many spies.

*How divine physicians detect diseases of the heart and faith from the
 faces of followers or strangers, and their voice and the colour of their
 eyes, and even without any of these through the heart, for the
 Prophet said: 'They are spies of the heart and so be sincere when
 sitting with them.'*

Physicians have much knowledge obviously: 1795
 They know more than you of your malady;
 They can tell from your urine how your health is,
 Though you can't through that means detect the illness.
 From your pulse, pallor, and your breath as well
 They see diseases in you and will tell.
 How should the world's own spiritual physicians
 Not know though you don't tell them your conditions?
 A hundred ailments they'll identify
 From your pulse, your complexion, and your eye.
 Only novice physicians really need 1800
 Such signs in you that they can clearly read,
 Since the perfected ones know who you are
 And enter in your being's depths from afar.
 In fact some years before your birth they see
 You and all of your life's course easily.

How Abu Yazid predicted the birth of Abo 'l-Hasan Kharagani
years ahead of time as well as signs of his appearance and
behaviour, one by one, and how the historians wrote about it for the
purpose of observation.*

About great Bayazid here's a narration
On what he saw of Abo 'l-Hasan's station:
That mystic king went to a barren plain
With students following behind in train.
A sweet scent suddenly arrived his way 1805
From Kharagan to where he stood near Rayy.
Then he let out right there an ardent cry,
Inhaling that scent as the wind blew by:
He lovingly breathed in that sweetest scent;
His spirit tasted wine in what was sent.
When condensation forms on the outside
Of a pot that contains much ice inside,
This is because of coldness in the air—
Moisture has not escaped from ice in there.
Scent-filled air turned to water similarly; 1810
Water then turned to pure wine mystically.

Due to effects of his intoxication,
A student asked about that inhalation:
'These lovely ecstasies seen in your person
Which all transcend the physical dimension—
Your face turns red, then yellow, and then white—
What is this? What's the message of this sight?
You breathe in scent, but flowers can't be seen—
No doubt it's God's rose garden that's unseen.
You are what every soul aspires to be; 1815
God's messages reach you continuously.
Each moment, as with Jacob, remedies
From Joseph reach your nose, so share one please.*
Pour from that pitcher one drop over us;
Share one scent from that garden far from us.
It's strange for us, O beauty who ranks high,

That you should drink and let our lips stay dry.
 Swift climber up to heaven, won't you share
 A swig of what you drank from over there?
 There is no prince of any gathering 1820
 As great as you—look at your following!
 How can one drink this wine and hide the action?
 Wine powerfully exposes every human.
 Though one might find a way to hide the smell,
 How can one hide one's drunken eyes as well?
 Even a million veils can't cover up
 This most distinctive smell—one should give up.
 This smell can fill the desert and the plain,
 Even heaven's nine spheres, so it's in vain.
 The naked can't be clothed—learning from that, 1825
 Don't plaster up the opening of this vat.
 You know all mysteries, so be kind today.
 Show what your falcon has made its new prey.'

Bayazid said, 'A wondrous scent came close,
 Like what from Yemen reached the Prophet's nose
 When he said, "On a breeze God's scent somehow
 Reached me from distant Yemen's lands just now.
 Ramin's scent travelled from the soul of Vays;*
 The scent of God arrives now from Oveys." '*
 A scent from Qarani that is so marvellous 1830
 Had made the Prophet drunkenly feel rapturous.
 Oveys had been effaced, so the terrestrial,
 Once self-annihilated, turned celestial.
 Myrobalan that's been conserved in sugar
 Will then no longer taste extremely bitter.
 Myrobalan that has been self-effaced
 Looks like myrobalan, but lacks that taste.
 We could go on and on with this discussion,
 So let's hear his words on God's revelation.

*The words of the Prophet, 'I perceive the breath of the Merciful
from the direction of Yemen.'*

Bayazid said, 'From that way comes a scent 1835
Which says that there a monarch will be sent:
A king will be born after many years
Who'll pitch his tent above the heavens' spheres.
His face so rosy from the Lord's rose garden,
He will traverse beyond my mystic station.'

'What is his name?' 'Abo 'l-Hasan,' he said,
And then from brow to chin described his head,
Then his hair, his fine stature, and his figure
In so much detail, then his face and pallor.
He also showed his spiritual description, 1840
From attributes to methods and high station.
Bodily descriptions are just there to borrow—
Don't set your heart on them! They're gone tomorrow.
The natural spirit's features also die—
Seek the soul that is far above the sky.
Though bodies are on earth like lamps, their light
Reaches beyond the heavens, far from sight:
The sun's rays come inside each person's home,
Its orb though is above the sky's high dome.
If roses' forms touch your nose, it's in vain, 1845
Because their scent can't reach up to your brain.
A sleeping man has dreamt of something gory;
It will appear as sweat now on his body.
The shirt was kept in Egypt in safe hands,
But nonetheless its scent filled Canaan's lands.*

The followers wrote down the time and date,
Like skewering kebabs prepared for fate.
The king was born on that date with precision
Starting the game of monarchy's backgammon.
Years later, Bo 'l-Hasan came there one day 1850

After great Bayazid had passed away,
 And this man's every single quality
 Appeared just as that monarch said they'd be.
*The Tablet that's preserved** was his director;
 From what is that preserved? From any error,
 Not through stars, sorcery, or dreams at night,
 But God's own words, and *He knows best what's right*.
 Sufis sometimes call this 'heart inspiration',
 To hide it from the general population—
 Accept this other 'heart' term seeing as He
 Is manifested there; it's error-free.*
 You can as well *see by God's light*, believer—
 The Prophet said this; then you're free from error.

1855

*The reduction of the allowance of God's food for the heart and soul
of the Sufi.*

Poverty shouldn't worry dervishes;
 Its essence is their food and wet-nurses,
 For heaven grew out of misfortune, while
 Mercy comes from the broken under trial.
 God and His creatures' mercy don't come near
 The one who smashes others' heads down here.

This talk has no end, and that poet's lost
 All strength through lack of food, a heavy cost.
 Happy the Sufi with a food reduction:
 His bead becomes a pearl, and he an ocean.
 He who learns of that special salary
 Merits that pay's source's proximity.
 His soul will start to tremble, though, all over
 If his own mystic wages are made lower,
 For he'll know he's earned that with an infringement,
 Ruffling the jasmine bed of God's contentment,
 Just like that person who wrote to the owner
 About why his crop share had been made lower:
 They took his note to the top judge to read;
 He chose not to reply or to take heed:

1860

1865

'Loss of fine food is all he's had to suffer—
For stupid people silence is the answer.'
He lacks the pain of being apart from Oneness;
He doesn't seek the root, but worships branches.
He's vile and he has died in selfishness,
Grieving the branch; the root's not what he'll miss.

Heaven and earth are apples that you see, 1870
Which are made manifest by God's power's tree.
You're like a worm inside and unaware
About the tree and how it was grown there.
A worm is in the apple, deep inside,
And its soul waves a flag on the outside;
Its movements split the apple from within—
The apple cannot hold that pressure in.
Its movement tears the veils, so it must be
Worm in form, dragon in reality.
The spark that darts from iron initially 1875
Places its feet outside so gingerly;
Cotton keeps it alive at first with care,
Then watches as its flame soars in the air—
Humans at first must eat and sleep, but they
Can soar beyond the angels' reach one day;
Cotton and matches nurture that one's light,
But his flame soars beyond stars, far from sight.
He can light up the dark world and dismantle
Strong iron fetters with a tiny needle.

Though fire is also something physical, 1880
Isn't its origin still spiritual?
Body has no share in the mystic glory;
Body is a mere drop next to the soul's sea.
The soul's what makes the body's days increase:
When the soul leaves, the body's life will cease.
The limit of your body is so small;
Your soul soars to the sky above us all.
The journey to Baghdad and Samarkand

For spirits is one step across the land.
 Your eyeballs weigh the same as two coins though 1885
 Their spirit's light sees heaven from below.
 Without the eyes, through dreams this light can see;
 Without this light, eyes are blind totally.
 The spirit's separate from beards and moustaches;
 Without the spirit, bodies are just corpses.
 I've talked about the animal type of spirit;
 The human spirit goes beyond its limit.
 Transcend the human, Moses, and discussion,
 To reach the shore of Gabriel's spirit's ocean!
 Mohammad's soul beyond then kisses you 1890
 And Gabriel will crawl back, so scared of you,
 Saying: 'If by one bow-length I come near
 To you, at once I'll be consumed right here.'*

The young man becomes agitated because no reply comes from the king to his letter.

This desert has no top or bottom either.
 That young man found he didn't get an answer:
 'How strange the king chose not to answer me!
 Maybe it is the courier's trickery,
 Hiding the note I wrote from the king's eyes,
 Like water shifting under straw, through lies?
 To test this out I'll write another letter 1895
 And use a different courier who is better.'
 The courier, kitchen head, and king: all three
 Were blamed by this fool through stupidity.
 He didn't once look at himself to say:
 'I'm being perverse like those whose faith's astray.'

The wind blew improperly on Solomon because of his error.

Wind blew improperly on Solomon's throne.
 'Don't creep improperly,' that king would moan.
 The wind said, 'Stop behaving so perversely.
 If you persist you can't complain about me.
 God set up weighing scales at the beginning, 1900

So justice is received by all. You're wishing
To give short measure, so that's what I'll do—
Be straight with me and I'll be straight with you.'
Likewise Solomon's crown once blocked his sight
When it slid down—it made his day like night.
'Don't slide lopsided, crown, while on my head!
Sun, don't set on my east!' that king then said.
He repositioned the lopsided crown,
However, it would keep on sliding down.
He did this eight times; it slid stubbornly. 1905
He said, 'What's up? Don't creep improperly!'
It said, 'Though often by you I'm corrected,
I will stay crooked, king, while you are crooked.'
Solomon straightened then his inner being;
He drew his heart back from what he'd been dreaming
To win, and it returned to its first state
Just as he'd wanted it—his crown was straight.
He made it crooked then deliberately—
It sought itself to rest as meant to be.
He made it crooked eight times, but instead 1910
Each time that crown would straighten on his head.
The crown spoke, 'King, be proud that you today
Have freed your wings from clay and fly away.'

To say more now is not allowed for me,
Nor to unveil this matter's mystery.
Cover my mouth when your hand is in reach
To stop it uttering this unwelcome speech.
Whatever grief befalls you, please admit
It's your fault—don't blame others now for it.
Don't be suspicious and resort to hating, 1915
Don't do what that young man was contemplating,
Fighting the kitchen head first, then the courier,
Directing all his anger at the ruler.
Pharaoh-like, you'll chop every baby's head,
Though he let the young Moses stay instead
In his own house: that one with a blind heart
Chopped others' necks and could not tell apart.

You, too, treat badly others who're outside,
 While treating well the harmful self inside.
 It is your foe, but you give it a sweet, 1920
 Instead accusing everyone you meet,
 Like Pharaoh blind and so blind-hearted too,
 Mean to the blameless, nice to who harms you.
 For how long, Pharaoh, will you choose to kill
 The blameless, pampering your body still.
 This one excelled all kings with his sharp mind,
 But God's will made him ignorant and blind.
 God's seal on wisdom's eyes and ears can turn
 To beasts men who're like Plato, though they learn.
 Etched on the Tablet is the Lord's decision 1925
 About what comes, like Bayazid's prediction.

*Shaikh Abo 'l-Hasan hears Bayazid's announcement
informing about his coming to existence and his
circumstances.*

It happened as he'd said it would turn out
 And from his people Bo 'l-Hasan found out
 That Bayazid, before he had been born,
 Had said, 'He'll study at my tomb each dawn.'
 Bo 'l-Hasan said, 'In dreams I've had a view
 Of him and heard the shaikh's soul say it too.'
 He'd set off for his grave each dawn and wait
 Until the sunrise. There he'd meditate.
 Bayazid's image either then appeared 1930
 Or wordlessly his problems disappeared,
 Until one day he came auspiciously
 When snow had covered all graves recently:
 Snow piled as high as standards far and wide
 With mounds on top. He felt much pain inside.
 A shout came from the shaikh's tomb suddenly:
 'I call you so that you might run to me,
 So rush towards my voice—approach this way,
 The world's snow-filled. Seek me, don't turn away.'
 His inner state was good from then, and he 1935
 Saw wonders he'd just heard of previously.

*That young man writes another note to the king since he did not get
a reply to the first one.*

That young, suspicious one wrote one more letter
Full of complaints, blame, and appalling matter.
He wrote, 'I've written this once previously,
But did it reach the king successfully?'
That handsome king received and read this letter,
But chose not to reply to this one either,
Maintaining silent treatment as before—
That young man wrote again and sent five more.
'He works for you,' the chamberlain then said, 1940
'So there's no fault in answering instead.
How will it harm you if you drop your stance
And cast upon this servant just one glance?'
'That would be simple,' then the king objected,
'But he's a wretch whom even God rejected.
If I forgive his sin and his transgression,
I might catch his disease from his infection.'
From just one scab a hundred quickly spread,
Especially the kind that all men dread.
May infidels be spared scabs of the brainless 1945
Whose bad luck even makes the clouds all rainless,
Such that a single drop will not rain down;
That bad luck also ruins every town.
Those fools' scabs brought in Noah's Flood that razed
A whole world just so they would be disgraced.
'Whoever is a fool', the Prophet said,
'Is my foe, the waylaying ghoul men dread.
One who's intelligent is our soul and
His breeze is like our basil in this land.'
If intellect reproach me, I'm content. 1950
It brings grace and from grace's source it's sent.
Such a reproach has so much benefit:
That host's fine table has much food on it.
But if a wretch brings to my lips some halva
That makes me sick and I soon get a fever.
You should know, if enlightened and with favour,

That kissing donkey's asses has no savour.
He pulls out the moustaches of your manhood;
His pot makes clothes black, but it is without food.

The table's spread is wisdom, not just meat, 1955
The light of wisdom, food for souls to eat.
Man has no food apart from light at all.
There's no alternative to feed the soul.
Cut yourself off from plain food gradually—
That's donkey feed next to food of the free.
This way you'll gain original food one night
And you'll consume the morsels of pure light.
That light's reflection made these things food; grace
From that Soul made our souls in the first place.
Once you take one bite of this food of light, 1960
You'll bury thoughts of oven bread from sight.
There are two kinds of knowledge and the former
Is what you learn at school as a young scholar
From your books, teachers, thinking, and your memory,
Concepts and interesting new fields of study.
You will surpass men with the knowledge gained,
Yet you'll be burdened by what you've retained,
For in your search you're a retaining tablet—
One who transcends is the Protected Tablet.
This other knowledge comes from God's bestowal 1965
And this true wisdom's found inside your soul.
When wisdom's water gushes in your breast
It never stagnates; it's forever blest.
Why feel concerned if its path's blocked outside
When it keeps gushing constantly inside?
The knowledge that's acquired though is a river
That runs through streams to homes to give men water;
If their path's blocked the home's supply will end—
Seek the fount deep within yourself, my friend!

*The story about someone who was consulting another man
who then said, 'Consult someone else because
I am your enemy.'*

A man went to consult another person 1970
To be delivered from his own confusion.
That man said, 'Go, find someone else instead
And tell him of what fills you now with dread.
I am a foe, so do not turn to me;
No one is helped by their own enemy.
Go, find a friend of yours, for friends help out
And always wish you well, so there's no doubt.
I am a foe, and so inevitably
Self-interest makes me act with enmity.
Who'd ask a wolf to guard his sheep? Tell me. 1975
To seek from the wrong place is idiocy.
I am your enemy without a doubt;
I waylay you; how could I help you out?'

Whoever sits with friends is in a park
Even if in a furnace, hot and dark.
Whoever sits with foes is in a furnace
Even if sitting in a park or palace.
Don't hurt your friend by acting selfishly
In case he should become your enemy.
For God's sake and your own soul's peace, do good 1980
To other people, treat them as you should,
So they appear as friends always to you
And your heart blocks out ugly hate's thoughts, too.
Since you've shown enmity, now pay attention—
Consult a friend who can inspire affection!
He said, 'I know you, Bo 'l-Hasan,* to be
Someone who's viewed me as an enemy,
But you're so rational and so spiritual;
Reason stops you from being corrupt at all.'

Our nature wishes us to hate our foe; 1985
 Reason's a chain that keeps the self in tow.
 It comes, restrains, and keeps the self at bay
 Like a chief of police in a good way.
 Faith's reason is a just chief of police,
 Guarding and governing the heart with peace.
 It is alert like cats, not thieves who stay
 Inside a hole like mice throughout the day.
 Wherever mice prevail, be certain that
 There's no cat, or just pictures of a cat.
 What is a cat? Faith's reason wears the crown, 1990
 A lion that with ease pins others down.
 It governs all the ravenous with its roar;
 Its yelling wards off every herbivore.
 This city's filled with every kind of thief
 Even if there's a law-enforcement chief.

*The Prophet Mohammad made a young man of the
 Hozayl tribe the commander of a brigade which included
 senior soldiers and experienced fighters.*

The Prophet once sent out a whole brigade
 To fight each infidel and renegade.
 He picked a youth from the Hozayl's tribe's groups
 As chief and the commander of the troops.

The chief is the foundation of an army; 1995
 Without a chief they are a headless body.
 The fact you're withering and almost dead
 Is due to your abandoning your head:
 From being lazy, selfish, and a miser,
 You've turned away and made yourself commander.
 You're like the mule who leaves its load alone
 And wanders to the mountain on its own.
 The owner chases it and from behind
 Shouts, 'Giddy one, wolves there devour your kind.

If you should disappear now from my vision, 2000
A wolf will follow you from each direction
And chew all of your bones as if they're sugar,
So you can't possibly survive much longer.
Rebel and you will certainly lack food;
Fire is extinguished by a lack of wood.
Beware not to flee now from my control
And your own heavy load, for I'm your soul.'
You are a beast, too, for your self's your ruler;
What dominates rules you, O self-adorer.
God called you horse, not ass, so understand. 2005
Arabs say, '*Come!*' to horses as command.
Mohammad was God's stable chief, so he
Helped beasts against their base self's tyranny.
'Say, "*Come!*"'* he said through kindness, 'So I can
Train you—I am the trainer for each man.
I have trained many carnal souls, and I
Have felt the kicks that animals let fly.'
When someone tries to train and teach another,
Inevitably kicks come flying, brother.
The most strike Prophets on their holy mission; 2010
Training, base one, is in itself affliction.
You're stumbling—at my word, try trotting faster
And smoothly for the carriage of your master.
God said, 'Say, "*Come!*"' Say, "*Come!*"'* we also read,
'To beasts who have fled discipline.' Take heed!
Prophet, if they don't come, don't feel unhappy
And don't resent those who won't act steadfastly.
The ears of some are deaf to '*Come!*', unable
To take heed, since all beasts have their own stable.
This call makes some run, very stimulated; 2015
In stables horses' stalls are separated.
This story makes some sad and desperate
Because each bird's cage is kept separate.
The angels aren't considered to be even—
That's why they are of different ranks in heaven.
Though children may attend the same school class,
Some will excel, some fail, and some just pass.
All men across the world have sense perception,

But just the eye's perception gives us vision:
 Although a hundred ears line up to try, 2020
 They would still need help from a seeing eye.
 The lined-up ears have their own special role
 For hearing revelation and the soul.
 A million eyes can't do the same for you:
 About the auditory, eyes have no clue.
 If you go through the senses, you'll discover
 None can perform the function of another.
 There are five outward senses, five inside.
*They're ranked** in ten ranks, standing classified.
 Those who turn round from faith's rank you will find 2025
 Falling down to a rank that lags behind.
 Do not downplay the word '*Come!*'* for this word
 Is a supreme elixir that you've heard.
 Though copper ones reject it when they're told it,
 Regardless you should not try to withhold it.
 The sorcerer-like self has them now bound;
 Your words will help them later. They're profound.
Say 'Come!' Say 'Come!',* O young man, without cease
 And be aware that *God invites to peace.**
 Come back, good man, from selfish leadership; 2030
 Seek out instead a leader—that's my tip.

An objector protested to the Prophet about his appointment of the man from the Hozayl as commander.

The Prophet made that Hozayli commander
 Of that brigade, with God as his supporter.
 Sheer jealousy meant one wretch couldn't take it,
 So he objected and would not embrace it.

Look at how dark the people are today—
 They're self-effaced in objects that decay.
 They live in separation due to pride;
 Their souls are dead since all their life they've lied.
 It's strange the soul's in gaol when you can see 2035
 That in its hand it holds its own cell's key.

That young man is immersed in dung now wholly,
Although a flowing river flows so closely.
He can't keep still, but fidgets all the while,
Though there's a couch where he can rest in style.
The light is hidden, but the search makes plain
The heart does not seek refuge out in vain.
If there were no way out from this world's prison,
Hearts wouldn't seek escape and feel aversion.
Aversion to this world drags you as guardian, 2040
Saying, 'Seek now the path of guidance, lost one!'
There is a way out, but it's hidden deeply;
To find it you must clutch at straws initially.
All separation secretly seeks union;
Look at the seeker to see there the sought one.
Dead plants in gardens jump up straight away:
'Understand the life-giver!' they all say.
Prisoners watch the door that leads outside—
Why do that if there's no news from that side?
Why would a million soiled ones seek clean water 2045
If there weren't a supply in the clean river?
The ground's not comfortable now for your back;
At home you have the mattress you now lack—
Without a resting place, no restless roamer,
Without relief from headaches, no hangover.

That rebel said, 'Prophet, I disagree;
A leader should have seniority:
Though this youth be a lion cub or bolder,
The army's leader should be someone older.
And you have also clearly stated once 2050
"The leader must be old." That's evidence.
Survey this army now, O Messenger—
Several are older and superior.'
Its leaves have yellowed, but the tree's not dead;
Focus on its ripe apples now instead.
Yellow leaves aren't a sign of imperfection;
This is a sign of ripeness and perfection.
Like yellow leaves, a white beard on the chin

Brings good news that some wisdom lies within.
 However, green leaves of the newborn type 2055
 Are a clear sign that fruit will be unripe.
 The mystic's sign is food from nothingness;
 The flushing banker loves gold's yellowness.
 The beard's first hair is on a flushed one's cheek—
 This one has only learned to write this week;
 The handwriting of this one is still crooked;
 His body moves fast, but his brain is crippled.
 An old man's legs might not run very fast,
 But his brain has acquired wings and soars past.
 Just look at Ja'far if you doubt such things: 2060
 In place of limbs God gave His servant wings.*
 Leave gold behind; this speech has been disturbed.
 Like mercury my heart has been perturbed.
 One hundred silent, sweet-breathed ones within me
 Put fingers to their lips: 'Enough!' they tell me.
 The sea is silence; rivers are palaver:
 The sea pursues you; don't seek out the river.
 Don't turn round from the sea's signs. Make this end.
 And *God knows best what is correct*, my friend.

But that irreverent one refused to drop it: 2065
 He droned on with vain words before the Prophet.
 Speech gave a helping hand, but he was clueless;
 Compared with sight that knowledge is so useless.
 It's secondary to vision: that is clear
 For those who're absent, not for those who're here.
 For one who has true vision as his gain
 These kinds of knowledge are absurd and vain.
 You've sat next to your sweetheart, so today
 Push all the intermediaries away.
 Those who have grown up are no longer keen 2070
 To read books or employ a go-between.
 That one reads books just for the needs of teaching;
 Helping men learn is his sole aim in speaking.
 It's wrong to speak before those who can see;
 That's negligence and a deficiency.

Silence is best near seers who understand:
 ‘*Be silent!*’* came down as the Lord’s command.
Speak joyfully if he invites you to,
 But don’t go on at length. Make your words few.
And if he should request that you speak longer, 2075
 Be modest still as you obey his order.
Just as I do with this most handsome youth,
 Hosamoddin, who is the light of Truth.
When I cut short what I provide of guidance,
 He lures me back there with some new contrivance.
Hosamoddin, you are God’s Glory’s Light—
 Why do you ask for speech when you have sight?
Is *love for the desired one* causing this?
 Give me some wine and tell me what it is.
His cup is on your lips, but your ears dare 2080
 To ask Him still, ‘Where then is the ear’s share?’
Your share’s the warmth—you’re warm and drunk in bliss.
 They answer, ‘Our desire is more than this.’

The Prophet Mohammad answers the objector.

While present with our own sweet-natured Prophet
 When that man argued on beyond the limit,
That king of ‘*By the star*’, ‘*His favour’s*’ ruler,*
 Bit his lip, said ‘Enough!’ to that vain babbler.
He blocked that man’s mouth with his hand to say:
 ‘How long before the Unseen’s knower this way
Will you continue? You have brought dried shit 2085
 And urged, “Instead of purest musk buy it!”
O stinking brain, you place it to your nose
 And say, “How lovely!” though it’s not a rose.
Wretch, you’ve said, “Ah!” to a most noxious smell,
 So that your rotten goods will quickly sell,
So you can trick the holy sense perception,
 The one that grazes in the heavenly garden.’

That giant’s forbearance has misled the fickle,
 But one must recognize oneself a little;

The pot was left uncovered through the night, 2090
 But cats should feel ashamed to eat in sight.
 That glorious one pretends to sleep—beware:
 Don't try to snatch his turban. He's aware.
 O stubborn wretch, for how long will you say
 Those bad spells to the Prophet of the day?
 Such men have much forbearance, by the millions,
 And each of these is like a hundred mountains.
 Each one, too, makes fools of the watchful spies
 And misleads even men with scores of eyes.
 And this forbearance is like lovely wine 2095
 Reaching up to one's brain in ways so fine.
 Observe one drunk on marvellous wine—now he
 Moves like a queen in chess, diagonally.
 Through the fast-acting wine, that man has rolled
 Onto the street as if he's very old,
 That wine especially from the vat of 'Yes!',"*
 Not wine that gives just one night's drunkenness.
 That wine which to the seven sleepers gave
 Three hundred and nine years inside the cave.*
 Egyptian women drank one cup of it, 2100
 Then cut their hands with knives not meant for it.*
 Sorcerers had Moses's intoxication
 And deemed the gallows their beloved station.
 Flying Ja'far* got drunk with that wine and
 Selflessly pawned away both leg and hand.

*Story about Abu Yazid's saying 'Glory be to me! How
 magnificent my rank is!', the opposition of disciples,
 and his response to this through visions rather than through
 saying words.*

The noble Sufi Bayazid once told
 His own disciples, 'I am God, behold!'
 While drunk that master said explicitly:
 'There is no god but I, so worship me!'
 When that state left him on the following day, 2105
 They said, 'You spoke in an improper way.'

He said, 'The next time I act similarly
Then strike at me with knives immediately.
I am with body, that which God transcends.
When I speak that way you must kill me, friends.'
This sound advice from one so liberated
Meant each disciple fetched a knife and waited.
Again he got drunk from that awesome flagon
And he forgot all the advice he'd given.
Sweets came and intellect could not be traced;
Dawn came and then his candle was effaced.

2110

Reasoning is the chief of police, so when
The sultan comes it creeps away again.
Reason's shadow, God's sunlight, and not one
Shadow has ever stood up to the sun.
If just one sprite controls a man, the cost
Is that his attributes are quickly lost.
What he says is in fact what that sprite said:
He speaks the absent one's words here instead.
When a mere sprite can be a dominator,
Imagine then the power of the Creator:
His self has gone—that man's become the sprite;
The Turk speaks Arabic without the light.
He doesn't know a word when he comes to—
That sprite's possessed his traits and essence too.
How can the Lord of Man and sprites then be
Inferior to the sprite? Please answer me.
If someone drunk should kill a lion, you'd say
'The wine did it, not him!' And if one day
He says words precious as rare gold, then you
Will say, 'It is the drink that's talking through.'
Some wine can cause a stunning transformation—
Is God's light too weak for such domination
Which empties yourself from you totally,
So you're brought low and He speaks loftily?
The Prophet's mouth spoke the Qur'an as well—
Claim 'They're not God's words,' you're an infidel.

2115

2120

When selflessness's bird flew out of reach
 Great Bayazid then started baffling speech.
 Bewilderment's flood stole away his reason; 2125
 He spoke more strongly than he had first spoken:
 'There's nothing in my cloak but God,' he said,
 'Why seek on earth and heaven now instead?'
 All his disciples fell into a frenzy
 And stuck their knives into his holy body.
 Like the Assassins,* each one plunged his blade
 Into his master and none felt afraid.
 Whoever stabbed with his knife was reversely
 In fact just splitting open his own body.
 On that great master's body wounds weren't found 2130
 But on their bodies which in blood soon drowned.
 Whoever had attacked his throat could witness
 His own throat slit, and died abased and helpless,
 While he who stabbed him in the chest instead
 Saw his own chest split open and fell dead.
 But he who was acquainted with that sultan
 Did not feel right to strike him with his weapon:
 His partial knowledge bound his hands—his life
 Was saved and he was just cut by his knife.
 Their numbers were depleted by the dawn 2135
 And in their houses men began to mourn.
 Thousands of people came to Bayazid,
 Saying: 'Two worlds within one shirt indeed:
 If yours were really just a human body
 By daggers you'd have been destroyed now totally.'

A man with self fought someone who was selfless:
 He stabbed with thorns his own eye in the process.
 You who stab selfless ones with swords should know
 You only stab yourself with every blow.
 The selfless ones live in security; 2140
 Effaced they stay safe for eternity.
 His form has gone and he's become a mirror;
 There's naught there but the image of another.
 If you spit at it, it falls on your head;

If you strike it, you strike yourself instead.
You see an ugly face there? That is you.
Jesus and Mary? That view is you, too:
He's neither this nor that; He is transparent.
It is your own face that He makes apparent.
Lips sealed up when the speech reached this last part; 2145
Once the pen reached these words, it split apart.
Close your lips, though fine eloquence today
Is at your service. *God knows the best way.*
You're on the roof's edge, drunkard, so take care.
Sit down or you will fall off from up there.
Regard each moment of success that's sweet
As being on the roof edge at some feet.
Fear losing that sweet moment and conceal it
Like precious treasure, and do not reveal it.
Go to that ambush hideout with much caution 2150
So you don't suffer there all of a sudden.
At joy's time your soul's fear of loss will mean
Escape then from the roof edge that's unseen—
Though you don't see the secret roof edge, friend,
Your soul sees and it fears it's near the end.
Every chastisement that came suddenly
Has come at joy's own roof edge purposefully.
The roof edge is the sole place where men fall.
From Noah and Lot's people learn it all.

*Explaining the cause of the eloquence and talkativeness in that
interferer while with the Prophet.*

The Prophet's drunkenness sent out a ray 2155
Which struck that wretch and made him drunk that day:
His talkativeness was due to euphoria;
He put aside decorum for hysteria.
Losing your wits does not cause badness always:
Wine makes ill-mannered ones much worse in their ways;
If one is wise it makes one lovelier,
But, if bad-tempered, one gets angrier.
They have made wine prohibited to all
Since most are bad and reprehensible.

The Prophet's explanation of the reason for his preferring and choosing the Hozayli man as commander and chief of the army over the elders and veterans.

Rulings are based on numbers in these lands: 2160

Most are bad, so the sword's seized from thieves' hands.

The Prophet said, 'You just see his appearance;

Don't judge him young and lacking in experience.

With beards still black, some men have wisdom's light;

Others have black hearts, though their beards are white.

I've tested often his sagacity:

The youth's work shows his seniority.'

Seniority in wisdom matters there,

Not a white beard or on one's head white hair.

Who's older than cursed Satan of you men? 2165

Without intelligence one's worthless then.

A child with Jesus's breath would be free

From arrogance and craving totally.

Maturity is proven by white hair

Only to blinkered men who're unaware.

Blind imitators trust such proof alone:

To them through outward signs the way is known.

We've said for that man's sake, 'When it's some order

That you desire, then choose one who's maturer,

One free from veils of mere blind imitation 2170

Who sees the truth through God's illumination.'

His light, without an argument, can split

The shell so it can deeply enter it.

Form followers can't tell real coin from base—

How should they know which type they're going to face?

Much gold has turned black due to smoke's trace and

This has helped it escape the robber's hand.

Much copper has been gilded with real gold,

So to the gullible it can be sold.

Inward observers like us in each province 2175

See hearts and disregard the mere appearance.

Judges who see appearances alone

Make rulings based on them, which is well known.

When someone shows faith and gives testimony,
These people think he's faithful instantly—
Behind this form pretenders have stayed hidden
Then secretly killed Muslims by the dozen.

In faith and wisdom try to be most senior
Like Universal Intellect, see deeper
Within; when it appeared from nothingness, 2180
God gave it robes of honour as its dress,
And many lovely names, the smallest one
Of which means that it won't need anyone.
This Intellect shows its face physically—
Next to its light, day seems dark stunningly.
But if an ugly one is made apparent,
Next to him suddenly the night seems radiant,
For he is darker than the night. The bat,
Being wretched, is a customer of that.
Get used to daylight's radiance gradually 2185
Or you'll lose out like bats eternally.
That one loves problem places and he hates
Those that have lamps that give one joyful states;
His heart seeks darkness of the sorriest plight
So his achievements seem great in that light,
So with that plight you'll be preoccupied
And overlook his ugliness inside.

*The mark of the wise and the half-wise one, the complete
man and the half-complete man, and the worthless wretch.*

The one who has the lamp's the real wise man,
The guide and leader of the caravan.
That leader follows his own light, lacks self, 2190
And that's why he can follow just himself.
He has self-confidence, and also you
Believe in that light which feeds his soul, too.
The second one who only is half-wise
Uses the fully wise as his own eyes;

Like a blind man he holds on to his guide
 To see through him and do what's dignified.
 The donkey who lacks wisdom totally
 Ignores the wise through his own idiocy.
 He's ignorant of this path and his pride 2195
 Stops him from following a knowing guide.
 He goes into the desert all the same,
 Sometimes at pace, sometimes as though he's lame.
 He has no candle to show the direction,
 Nor half of one from which to seek instruction.
 He lacks full wisdom for a living breath,
 Or even half, through which to seek sound death:
 The half-wise dies before the fully wise,
 So from his low start he can quickly rise;
 If you lack wisdom, then you should choose death, 2200
 Protected by the wise with living breath.
 Others can't breathe like Jesus—not alive yet—
 And can't receive his pure breath—they've not died yet—
 Their blind souls step in every direction,
 But leap without escaping their location.

*Story about the lake, the fishermen, and the three fish—
 one wise; one half-wise; and one deluded, stupid, heedless,
 and worthless—and the outcome for all three fish.*

This tale about the lake in which were found
 Three special fish who liked to swim around
 Is in Kalila and Dimna* as well,
 But here's the kernel—that book's is the shell.
 Some fishermen passed by the lake one day 2205
 And noticed deep inside it hidden prey.
 They rushed back to their net and brought it there;
 The fish all noticed and became aware.
 The wise one then resolved to move along
 The path that's difficult and for the strong.
 He thought, 'I won't consult them, since they're bound
 To weaken my resolve which now is sound.

Love of their homeland holds them rigidly;
 Their sloth and ignorance both clash with me.
 I need somebody now for consultation 2210
 Who can revive me, but where's his location?'
 O traveller, consult one who's the same—
 Consulting weaklings only makes you lame.
 Pass from *love of the homeland*; don't stop here—
 The homeland's yonder; souls aren't from this sphere.
 You want the homeland? Reach the other side;
 Don't misread this hadith that's verified.*

*The mystery of the recitation of specific prayers when one does ablutions.**

For every part while you do your ablution,
 There is a different prayer and recitation:
 While rinsing out your nose, you're meant to plead 2215
 For heaven's scent from God, Who's free from need,
 So it draws you to paradise at once,
 Since scent is the rose bush's evidence.
 When you wipe your arse clean of any shit,
 The prayer is: 'O Lord, please cleanse me of it!
 My hand touched there while cleaning—that's its role,
 But it is much too weak to clean the soul.
 You who can make a nobody's soul worthy,
 Your grace's hand can reach our spirits easily.
 This is my limit—I've done what I can. 2220
 Most generous God, cleanse what's beyond this man.
 O God, I cleansed my skin of its pollution—
 Cleanse this friend of the world's events' distraction!'

Someone used to say while cleaning his arse: 'O God, let me smell the scent of paradise!' instead of 'O God, make me a repent and one of the purified!' which is the proper recitation while cleaning one's arse. He would also say the latter prayer instead when he was rinsing his nose. An esteemed man heard and could not tolerate it.

While cleaning his arse once a man recited:
 'Join me with heaven's scent, so I'm united!'
 A man said, 'That's a worthy recitation,

But this is not a fitting situation:
 While rinsing out one's nose that prayer is said—
 You've brought the nose prayer to your arse instead.
 One gains the scent of heaven through the nose— 2225
 Can it be gained by arses, you suppose?'
 You who have made so humble every fool
 And given pride to all the kings who rule,
 Disdain towards base men's appropriate—
 You'll just get chained by doing the opposite.
 It is for nostrils that we have the rose—
 Its scent, wretch, is intended for the nose:
 For our olfactory sense comes rose's scent;
 The dirty hole below is not what's meant.
 Through there you can't receive the scent of heaven; 2230
 If you need it, seek scent through the right organ.
*Love for the homeland** is right similarly—
 Identify that land initially.

The wise fish thought then, 'I will now depart
 And I'll detach from their advice my heart.'
 It's not time to consult now, so just go!
 Like Ali scream it in the well below: *
 To find one fit to share that scream is hard,
 Move secretly at night like a skilled guard.
 Head from this lake towards the open sea. 2235
 Seek that and leave this maelstrom rapidly.
 This wary fish set off in haste that night
 From danger's area to the sea of light.
 Like deer being chased by dogs, he will not stop
 But run while his veins still contain one drop.
 Dozing while dogs chase is an obvious error—
 How can your eyes feel drowsy while in terror?
 That fish departed for the ocean fast,
 Taking the long path through a gulf so vast.
 He saw much suffering and eventually 2240
 The path led him to calm security.
 He threw himself into the massive ocean
 That looked so limitless then to his vision.

When those same fishermen brought their net later
 The half-wise fish began to feel so bitter:
 'I've lost the opportunity!' it cried,
 'How did I fail to leave then with that guide?
 Though he went suddenly when he departed
 I should have rushed behind where he had darted.'
 Regretting what has passed is error, son; 2245
 It's pointless, for it won't return once gone.

*Story about the captive bird which advised: 'Don't regret the past.
 Think about it in the present so you won't waste time regretting.'*

A man once caught a bird inside a snare.
 The bird said, 'Princely man beyond compare,
 You've eaten many cows and sheep, and you
 Have sacrificed so many camels too—
 You were not sated once by them and now
 You think my body will suffice somehow?
 Release me and I'll give you three wise counsels—
 See if I'm wise or just one of the numbskulls.
 I'll tell the first one while perched on your hand, 2250
 The second after I hop off and land
 Upon your wall, the third while up a tree,
 Then from these counsels you'll live fortunately.
 On your hand: don't accept what you have heard
 From anyone if it should sound absurd.'
 Once it had said the first, perched on his hand,
 It hopped off to the wall, freed just as planned.
 It gave the second: 'Don't you ever fret
 About the past. It's left you. Quit regret.'
 Then 'Hidden in me', that bird chose to state, 2255
 'Is a rare pearl of ten dirhams in weight.
 I swear that jewel had always meant to be
 Your fortune and that of your progeny.
 But you have lost the pearl of such high worth.
 No other pearl like this exists on earth.'
 That man then started wailing like a mother
 About to give birth during painful labour.
 The bird continued, 'Didn't I just say

Not to grieve over what passed yesterday?
 Since it has passed and gone, why are you grieving? 2260
 Do you not get it? Are you hard of hearing?
 The other counsel that I have related
 Is: don't believe when the absurd is stated—
 I weigh less than three dirhams, so how can
 Something that weighs ten be in me, brave man?'
 The man regained composure and then said,
 'Tell me your third good counsel. Go ahead.'
 It said, 'Yeah right, you heeded the first two
 So well that I should tell the third to you!'

Giving the dozy fool advice that's sound 2265
 Is scattering good seeds over barren ground.
 Stupidity's rip can't be sewn together—
 Don't ever give it wisdom's seed, good counsellor!

The half-wise fish thinks of a solution and acts dead.

In suffering's hour the half-wise fish then said,
 While cut off from the wise fish's safe shade:
 'He's free from grief now he has reached the sea;
 Such a dear comrade has been lost to me.
 I'll act myself and not dwell on that now—
 I'll make myself look like I'm dead somehow:
 I'll raise my stomach up by rolling over 2270
 With my back upside down while on the water.
 Like twigs I'll move across its surface then,
 Floating, not swimming like the living men:
 Corpse-like I will surrender to the water;
 The death before death spares you from the torture.'
 The death before death is security;
 It's what Mohammad told of helpfully:
 'That all of you should now die is my teaching
 Before death comes and you die with much grieving.'

The fish played dead with stomach in the air; 2275
 Water then carried that fish here and there.
 Each fisherman grew so upset and cried:

'Alas the better of the two fish died!'
 The fish rejoiced at the 'Alas!' they said:
 'My trick worked and I have escaped the blade.'
 Then a skilled fisherman who'd come around
 Caught it, spat on it, threw it on the ground,
 But it rolled in seawater stealthily.

The third fish stayed in torment stupidly;
 That simpleton fish leapt up left, then right, 2280
 To flee through its own effort its sad plight.

They cast their net and caught it easily,
 Flung on the fire by its own idiocy:
 Inside a skillet while above the flame,
 Stupidity's bedfellow then became
 Completely burned by flames both hot and red—

'*Didn't a warner reach you?*'* Wisdom said.
 While suffering grief and torture, it replied:
 'Yes.' Like the souls of infidels who've died.

Then it continued, 'If on this occasion, 2285
 I can escape this tortuous tribulation,
 I'll have no home apart from the huge sea;
 I won't stay in a lake as previously.
 I'll be safe in the ocean that is boundless;
 From then on I'll roam safely, free from all stress.'

*Explanation that the vow made by a fool at the time of difficulty
and regret is faithless for 'Though they should be rebutted, they'll
return to what they were prohibited from doing; they are liars.'**

The false dawn is not reliable.

Wisdom replied, 'You're prone to idiocy
 And that breaks vows you make inevitably.
 To keep your vows you need intelligence;
 You lack that, donkey—get away at once!
 Intelligence enables your remembering 2290
 Your vow, and tears the veils of all forgetting.
 Forgetting rules you, since you are not wise;
 It fights with your control and nullifies.
 The wretched moth as well lacked any wisdom,
 Forgetting fire, so burning was its outcome.

Once its wings burn, it will repent, but then
 Lust and forgetfulness rule it again.
 Wisdom means noticing and memory,
 For wisdom raised these up originally.
 When there's no pearl, how can you have its lustre? 2295
 How can one be contrite without reminder?
 Lust is from lack of wisdom similarly,
 For it can't see the facts on idiocy.
 And that contrition was just due to terror,
 Not from intelligence that gleams like treasure.
 Once torture stops, contrition leaves with it;
 Such false repentance isn't worth a bit.
 It was caused by grief's darkness, and they say:
 "What's said at night will be effaced by day."
 Pain's darkness left and made that fool so happy; 2300
 Its outcome left that fool's heart just as quickly.
 While he repents, the master makes him learn:
 "If they should be rebutted they'll return."*

*Explaining that an imagining is the counterfeit of wisdom
 and its opposition, and resembles it but is not wisdom, and the
 story about the replies given to each other by Moses, possessor
 of wisdom, and Pharaoh, possessor of imaginings.*

Wisdom opposes lust like nothing can;
 Don't call what's lustful wisdom then, brave man.
 Beggars of lust are just imagining it,
 And that is wisdom's gold coin's counterfeit.
 Take them both to a touchstone rapidly
 Or you won't tell the difference tragically.
 The touchstone's the Qur'an, the Prophets' ways; 2305
 Like touchstones, each of these two sources says:
 'Come, see yourself through being involved with me;
 You can't cope with my path's itinerary.'
 If wisdom's sawn into two halves, it will
 Keep smiling through the painful burning still.
 Imagining is of Pharaoh, that world-burner,

While wisdom is of Moses, soul-illuminer.
Moses went on the path towards non-being.
Pharaoh asked, 'Tell me, who are you?' on seeing.
'I'm wisdom, God's own messenger,' he answered, 2310
'I am God's proof, secure from going wayward.'
'Shut up! Stop this commotion,' Pharaoh said;
'Tell me your lineage and true name instead.'
'I am one of His dust-pit's own descendants,
Originally named "the lowest of his servants".
I am the slave of that Lord who is singular,
With slaves for both my father and my mother.
My lineage comes from water, dust, and clay;
God gave both heart and soul to these one day.
Back to the earth my body will return, 2315
The same way that yours will, you nasty one.
Our origin and that of all proud humans
Is from the earth; the proofs run up to millions,
Since from the earth your body gains help, wretch;
Food from the earth helps your neck turn and stretch.
When soul leaves, body turns to dust again
In that grave that is dreaded by all men.
You, I, and those resembling you, one day,
Will turn to dust and your rank will not stay.'

Pharaoh said, 'You've another name, and it 2320
Differs from this and is a better fit:
'One of the slaves of Pharaoh, who has many,
And nurtured first your spirit and your body,'
A rebel enemy who chose desertion,
Fleeing this realm due to an ill-starred action,
You're false and ignorant while being bloodthirsty;
From attributes like these you are known easily.
In exile you are threadbare, poor, and low,
Because you failed to give me thanks you owe.'
Moses said, 'God forbid that one should claim 2325
Partnership with that King and not feel shame.
In kingship He has no associate;
His slaves have Him as Master and that's it.

His creatures have no other owner—they
 Who make such false claims will themselves decay.
 He has designed me; He is our designer.
 He who claims otherwise is a cruel liar.
 You cannot make my eyebrow that you view—
 How could you make my soul then? It's not true.
 You're the false rebel in reality, 2330
 For with the Lord you claim duality.
 Although I killed a ruffian once in error,
 It wasn't selfish or for my own pleasure.
 I punched him and he fell down suddenly.
 He who died lacked a soul originally.
 I killed a cur, you children—don't forget
 A million, harmless innocent ones yet:
 You've killed those babies and you have the guilt—
 What will come to you from the blood you've spilt?
 You murdered most of Jacob's progeny 2335
 In the vain hope of trying to murder me.
 In spite of you, God chose me anyway—
 What you concocted was upturned that day.'
 Pharaoh said, 'Let that go! Is there a doubt
 That this was my fate's share I've been dealt out,
 For you to put me down now in plain sight,
 To darken my day which had shone so bright?'
 'Abasement is then on the Final Day
 Much worse if you don't heed the things I say.
 A flea's bite is too painful now for you, 2340
 So if a snake should bite what will you do?
 It seems I'm spoiling your work outwardly—
 I'm turning it to roses actually.'

*Explaining that cultivation lies in destroying,
 concentration in distraction, soundness in brokenness,
 attainment in failure, and existence in non-existence,
 'and the remainder are opposites and pairs'.*

A man once started breaking up the ground.
 An idiot screamed whose anger was unbound:

'Why are you breaking up this earth by digging?
 You're spoiling this good soil now with your tilling.'
 The first man said, 'Let me be. Please depart.
 Tell growing and destruction's acts apart.
 This can't grow flowers or a field of wheat 2345
 Without disturbance that does not look neat.
 How will you see the fruit of a fine orchard
 Until its order first appears haphazard?'

Unless you lance the boil how will it heal,
 And how will you enjoy the way you feel?
 How will your health improve unless you try
 The medicines which will detoxify?
 The tailor cuts the cloth he sews up later
 To make clothes, but none then attack the tailor,
 And asks, 'Why have you cut this satin? What 2350
 Can I do with the pieces you have cut?'
 When an old building is replaced, one must
 Demolish it first till what's left is dust.
 The ironmongers, carpenters, and butchers
 Will first destroy and then become constructors.
 Medicinal herbs are also pulverized,
 So that the body gets revitalized.
 Till wheat is ground in mills no one is able
 To put attractive breads on their own table.
 That bread and salt appealed I don't forget, 2355
 O fish, to free you from your sad fate's net.
 You will escape the endless net of evil
 If you accept now Moses's good counsel.
 You've made yourself a slave of base desire;
 You've made a worm a dragon breathing fire.
 I've brought another dragon here for that one
 To fix with its breath that of your fierce dragon,
 So that it is subdued. Then mine will start
 To tear your fiery dragon's limbs apart.
 You can flee both if you accept submission; 2360
 If not your soul will face its demolition.

Pharaoh said, 'You're a sorcerer in fact;
 You've caused division through false ways you act.
 You've split a close group into separate factions,
 Just as you've caused splits in the rocks of mountains.'
 Moses said, 'I'm immersed in God's decree—
 Who ever mixed God's name with sorcery?
 That's based on negligence and unbelief;
 Moses's soul's the bright torch of belief.
 Moses resemble sorcerers? You're shameless. 2365
 My breath makes even Jesus feel so jealous.
 Resemble sorcerers? Filth, in my station
 My soul gives light to books of revelation!
 Since you are flying with desire's base wings
 You doubt me and dream up such hideous things.'

Whoever's actions are so wild and bestial
 Imagines wicked things about great people
 Since you are part of this world in its bondage,
 You just see everything in your own image:
 If when you turn, your head starts spinning too, 2370
 You'll think the room spins from your point of view.
 And if you sail a ship across the ocean,
 You'll think it is the coasts that are in motion.
 If after battle you feel crushed with sorrow,
 You'll view the world as being very narrow.
 If you feel joy as friends would like you to,
 The world will seem a rose garden to you.
 Many have gone as far as to Iraq
 Then told of lies and unbelief once back.
 Many have gone on to Herat and India 2375
 And said the trade is all that they remember,
 Or on to China and to Turkestan,
 And told just of deceit there from each man.
 Since he sees just the colour and the smell,
 Tell him to search in other lands as well.
 If a cow comes to Baghdad suddenly
 And wanders here and there so leisurely,
 Of all the marvellous pleasures found therein,

She'll notice nothing but a melon skin.
 If hay has fallen in the road, or grass, 2380
 It's suitable for that cow or an ass.
 Like dried meat hung on hooks from one's base nature,
 One's soul, tied thus to causes, won't grow greater.
 That realm where causes are all torn to bits
 Is *God's earth*,* mighty ruler here, and it's
 Replaced each moment—souls can actually see
 The world's renewal so explicitly.
 Though it be paradise and its famed rivers,
 It would turn ugly with unchanging features.

Explaining that every human sense perception also has different objects of perception which the other senses are unaware of, in the same way that every skilled craftsman is a stranger to the work of the other skilled craftsmen, and its lack of awareness about what is not its business does not prove that those objects of perception don't exist. Although it denies them due to its condition, here by its denial we don't mean anything but lack of awareness.

Your own perception limits your world view; 2385
 Your unclean senses veil the pure from you.
 Cleanse them in mystic vision's streams some moments;
 Deem this the Sufis' washing of their garments.
 Once you are pure the souls of men who're holy
 Will tear the veil off so they join you fully.
 If light and images were everywhere,
 The eyes would certainly then be aware.
 You've shut yours and you bring ears in their place
 To show them a fair maiden's curls and face:
 'We can't see images,' the ears make clear, 2390
 'But if the image makes noise we can hear.
 We're knowledgeable in the field we've chosen,
 Which is when there's a sound or words are spoken.'
 If you say, 'Come and see this beauty, nose.'
 It's not the right fit for what you propose.

'If it were musk or roses,' it will say,
 'Td smell them. All my knowledge comes this way.
 How can I see the beauty's face? Don't ask
 Of me such an impossible new task.'
 The crooked sense sees everything as flawed,
 Even if you go properly to God. 2395
 Cross-eyed eyes never see what's singular—
 My noble friend, of this you should be sure.

Moses said, 'Pharaoh, you're false totally;
 You think you are not different to me.
 Do not compare me with yourself, for you
 Perceive one thing as if it's really two.
 Just for one moment see me through my seeing,
 To then perceive a realm beyond your being,
 And flee from name and honour's narrow well,
 Then see pure love within pure love. Farewell.' 2400

When you've fled body, then you'll realize
 That ear and nose can both change into eyes.
 Bayazid's saying's true and not a lie:
 'A mystic's every hair becomes an eye.'
 Eyes were not eyes at first, as you should know,
 Inside the womb when in an embryo.
 The eye's white fat is not what gives you sight;
 If not, how come you dream with eyes shut tight?
 Demons can also see as can the jinn 2405
 Although their eyes don't have white fat within.
 There was no link between white fat and vision,*
 The Loving Maker has made that connection.
 Man comes from dust, but doesn't look like it;
 Jinn are of fire with naught else mixed with it.
 The jinn do not resemble fire, of course,
 However hard you look, though that's their source.
 Birds are of air and don't resemble it;
 God linked together things, though they don't fit.
 The link between such 'branches' and their 'root' 2410

Is out of reach for reason to compute.
 When Man is born of dust originally
 How then are son and father linked? Tell me.
 If there's a link, it's veiled from understanding:
 Reason can't know what's outside rationalizing.
 If eyeless vision were not gained from God,
 How could the wind have recognized the Aad?
 How could it have told faithful one from foe,
 Or wine from cup, if God did not bestow?
 If Nimrod's fire did not have eyes to see, 2415
 Could Abraham have been saved specially?
 If parting waves did not possess that vision,
 How did it tell a Jew from an Egyptian?
 If hills and mountains lacked perception, why
 Did they join David with words from on high?*

And if the ground did not have eyes within,
 How should it then have swallowed Korah in?
 The moaning pillar had eyes in its heart
 Knowing the time Mohammad would depart.*
 If gravel could not see to understand, 2420
 How then did it bear witness in a hand?*

O intellect, stretch your wings and recite:
*'The earth was made to quake with awesome might.'**

How can the earth speak up at Resurrection
 On good and evil if it does lack vision?
*She'll share her knowledge and experience, and
 Reveal her secrets so we understand.**

Moses said, 'His dispatching me to you
 Is proof the sender was aware and knew
 That such a medicine fits perfectly 2425
 To remedy this actual malady.
 You had yourself foreseen that God would choose
 Me, Moses, for this mission and would use
 The rod and light in my hand with success
 To shatter your horn of presumptuousness.
 And this is why the Lord of all religions
 Showed you a future through such scary visions

That suit your evil soul's wish to rebel—
 So you'll know He knows what suits you as well,
 So you'll know He is wise and knowing; He 2430
 Can heal the sickness with no remedy.
 Due to interpreting, you had turned blind
 To them, and thought "It's sleep's tricks on my mind."
 Then that astrologer and that physician,
 Though they saw flashes of the truth, kept hidden
 Selfishly all the facts: "Anxiety,"
 One said, "Does not suit your great majesty.
 Exotic food can lead to strange dreams, too,
 Or food that simply disagrees with you,"
 Because he saw you did not seek good counsel, 2435
 Being short-fused, bloodthirsty, far from humble.
 Real kings kill for reform, which they must manage,
 Their mercy though is greater than their damage.
 The king should have what's like his own Lord's nature:
 His mercy does prevail above His anger.*
 Anger should not prevail as with the Devil,
 Such that he sheds blood needlessly through evil.
 Neither a mildness that's effete, for then
 His wife and handmaid would choose other men.
 You've made your breast the Devil's home today, 2440
 And made spite the direction that you pray.
 Your sharp horn has left many with guts torn—
 Behold, my rod can break your shameless horn!

How worldly people attack other-worldly people and push against them as far as the border of reproduction and generation, which is the frontier of the Unseen, and how the other-worldly are unaware of the ambush, for the infidel makes an assault when the holy warrior is not fighting.

In their attack the worldly people's forces
 Surged at the mystic people's central fortress,
 To seize the passes to the Unseen realm,
 So holy ones won't come from there to them.

When holy warriors aren't fighting, then
The infidels surge—they're contrary men.
When the Unseen's pure warriors, out of kindness, 2445
Refrain from combat, you men who are hideous
Attack the passes that connect this sphere,
So men from the Unseen won't come down here.
You wrenched their loins and wombs through wicked ways,
So you could then control birth's passageways.
How can you seize the route the Glorious One
Opened for procreation? Stubborn one,
You blocked the frontier passes to end doubt,
But still a captive managed to get out.
Behold! I am that captain and I'll break 2450
Your power, name, and honour for His sake.
Come, block the passes tightly and then smile
At your own honour's moustache for a while—
Fate will tear out your moustache hair by hair:
'*Fate makes precaution blind*' will be shown there.
Is yours or is the Aad's moustache more scary
When all lands trembled at their breath, so wary?
Is yours or the Thamud's a fiercer face
When their like's not found in the human race?
If I give more examples now to you, 2455
Deaf one, you'll hear but still pretend not to.
I now repent of speech I've used, like sin;
Without it I've made you some medicine
Which I'll place on your boil that is so tender—
With your beard it will heal or burn forever,
So that, foe, you'll know He's informed and gives
What is most fitting to each thing that lives.
When have you ever acted wickedly
And not seen what fits that eventually?
When have you sent a good deed heavenward 2460
And not seen its like come back as reward?
If you remain alert and are observant,
You'll see your action's answer come each moment.
If you're observant and grasp straight away,
You will not need to wait till Judgement Day.
The one who takes the hint correctly here

Won't need to wait until it's all made clear.
 Stupidity is what gives you depression
 When you don't grasp the hint and the allusion.
 Your heart turned black due to your evil, so 2465
 Learn that one shouldn't act that way below,
 Lest arrow-like that darkness reaches you
 And brings the punishment for evil too.
 And if the arrow hasn't come, that's been
 Due to God's mercy. What you did was seen.
 So be observant if you are in need
 Of heart—something is born from every deed.
 And if you have a loftier aspiration,
 This venture goes beyond close observation.

*Explaining that the earthly body of Man, like high-
 quality iron, is capable of becoming a mirror, so that even
 while in this world, inside it heaven, hell, the
 Resurrection, and other things are shown to direct vision
 and not just through imagining.*

Though you're dark matter, just like iron, you 2470
 Should nonetheless start burnishing well too.
 Until your heart completely fills inside
 With lovely images on every side.
 Though iron's dark and it lacks any light,
 Burnishing takes its darkness, leaves it bright.
 Iron was burnished and this made its face
 So fair that images reflect their trace.
 The earthly body's coarse and dark as well—
 Burnish it, for it also shines up well,
 To bring the Unseen's forms to our perception, 2475
 Such as the heavenly angels' own reflection.
 For burnisher God gave you intellect,
 So your heart's surface might start to reflect.
 You've chained the burnisher, you who lack prayer,
 And freed the hands of lust, so be aware
 That if lust's put in chains, it's rectified,

For then the burnisher's hands get untied—
 All images are sent out to this clean
 Burnished iron that mirrors the Unseen.
 You'd made it dark and rusty, so please read: 2480
*'They work corruption on the earth.'** Take heed.
 Till now you have been acting in this way.
 You've made the water dark. Stop for today.
 Do not unsettle it—let it stay clear,
 Then watch the moon and stars spin round in here.
 Man is like water in the stream, and so
 When it turns dark you cannot see below.
 The stream is full of pearls and jewels—make sure
 Not to let it turn murky. It is pure.
 Man's spirit's like the air: when dust should rise, 2485
 It veils the spiritual realm then from our eyes;
 That blocks the vision of the sun, but then
 Once the dust's gone it's clear and pure again.
 Despite your total darkness, God showed you
 Visions so you might take the true path too.

*Moses spoke from the Unseen openly about Pharaoh's
 secrets and his visions, so he might believe.*

Moses said, 'Through His power He made so clear
 Visions of things which at the end appear.
 So you might stop your evil and oppression,
 But you got worse although you saw each vision.
 In dreams He showed you ugly forms to view— 2490
 You fled them, but they're images of you.
 A slave saw in the mirror's face reflected
 His ugly face, and so he defecated,
 Then screamed, "You're ugly, so this was your due."
 The mirror said, "Wretch, it all comes from you!
 You're shitting on your own face, which is ugly,
 Not on me, for I'm radiant and lovely."
 Once you saw burned up all the clothes you own,
 Then both your eyes and mouth so tightly sewn,

Then a beast seeking your blood, then your head 2495
 In a wild beast's jaws, filling you with dread.
 Then you were in a toilet upside down,
 Then in a bloody torrent where you'd drown.
 From the pure heavens you then heard cry out:
 "You're damned, you're damned, you're damned" and then a shout
 Came from the mountains, clear to understand:
 "*Begone, you're of the men of the left hand.*"*
 From all inanimates then came another:
 "Pharaoh has fallen into hell forever."
 There were worse ones that from shame I've not cited 2500
 Just in case your perverse form gets excited.
 You who will not accept, I've shown a bit,
 So that you'll know I am informed of it.
 You tried to blind and kill yourself back then,
 So you'd not have to see such things again.
 It has now come—how long will you try fleeing?
 It came despite your mastery of scheming.'

Explaining that the door of repentance is open

Beware not to continue—take precaution.
 God's kindness keeps repentance's door open.
 A door for your repentance in the West 2505
 Is open till the Final Day. Man's blessed.
 Till from the West the sun should one day rise*
 That door stays open—don't divert your eyes!
 Through mercy, heaven has eight doors, and one
 Of those doors is repentance's door, son.
 Other doors sometimes open, sometimes close.
 Repentance's stays open unlike those.
 Value this godsend, open constantly.
 Bring your baggage. Shun Satan's jealousy.

*Moses tells Pharaoh, 'Accept one piece of advice from me and take
 in return four benefits.'*

Moses said, 'Take one thing from me to learn, 2510
 And gain four new things from me in return.'

‘What is that one thing?’ Pharaoh then replied,
‘I need to have a bit more clarified.’
‘That thing is that you publicly say later
That there’s no God apart from the Creator
Who made the heavens and the stars above,
People, the Devil, jinn, birds like the dove,
The plain, the hill, the desert, and the sea.
None bear resemblance. His realm’s limit-free.’
Pharaoh asked, ‘What are those four things I’ll gain 2515
Which you’ll give in exchange? Show them. Explain,
So that this lovely promise’s grace might
Make my own unbelief become more light,
So that my unbelief’s lock that’s so heavy
Might open through the promise that’s so lovely,
So, through effects of that pure stream of honey,
Hate’s poison might change to that in my body,
So that the pure milk’s stream has the effect
Of nurturing the captive intellect,
So that I get drunk through that stream of wine 2520
Then start to taste commands that are divine,
So that, through streams of water’s grace, my flesh
That’s barren and destroyed might come out fresh,
So verdure might come to my soil that’s barren,
And my thorns turn to shelters up in heaven—
Paradise and its four streams,* through reflection,
Might help my soul seek God with zeal and passion,
Just as, through hell’s reflection, I’ve been bound
To turn to fire, and in God’s wrath I’ve drowned; 2525
From the reflection of the snake of hell,
I poison heaven’s people now as well.
From boiling water’s image, I start then
With tyranny to change to bones all men.
From hell’s most biting frost, I can start freezing,
While heat from its hot flames makes me start sizzling.
I’m now hell for those suffering tyranny
And poverty—woe to those under me!’

Moses explains the four benefits as reward awaiting Pharaoh's embrace of faith.

Moses replied, 'The first one of these four
 Is bodily health for you forevermore.
 Diseases written of in medicine 2530
 Will stay far from you, O fine specimen.
 You'll have a long life, secondly, for death
 Will hesitate to terminate your breath.
 And after such a life, it's not the case
 That you could, discontented, leave this place—
 Rather, with zeal for death like babies longing
 For milk, not due to being entrapped in suffering,
 You'll seek death—it's not due to suffering's pressure;
 Instead in your home's ruins you'll find treasure.
 You'll take the axe with your own hand this way 2535
 And strike the house without fear straight away;
 You'll see it as a barrier to the treasure,
 One grain that blocks a harvest none can measure—
 You'll fling that one grain into flames and then
 Adopt the practice of the valiant men,
 Because of love for one leaf you've lost orchards,
 Like a worm fixed on one leaf losing vineyards—
 When grace woke up that worm, it then at once
 Devoured the dragon of its ignorance.
 The worm turned to a vineyard straight away,* 2540
 Full of fruit, fortunate and changed this way.'

*Exegesis of 'I was a hidden treasure and I loved to be known'.**

Knock down the house—from Yemen's fine cornelian
 One can erect more houses by the million.
 The treasure's underneath, so there's no option—
 Don't fret or hold back from its demolition.
 Thousands of houses can be built up later
 From just one treasure, with no toil or labour.

The house itself will in the end decay
 And hidden treasure see the light of day,
 But it won't then be yours—the spirit gains 2545
 Rewards for breaking up all the remains:
 If you don't do the work, your wage is nothing,
*There's naught for Man but that for which he's struggling.**
 You'll bite your hand then and you'll cry aloud:
 'Such a fine moon was there behind the cloud!
 I didn't do the good things recommended
 And treasure's gone while I'm left empty-handed.'
 You've rented your house—it's not your possession
 For you to buy or sell it through transaction.
 The rent term is until your death, so you 2550
 Can work in it until that date is due.
 You just sew patches in this store. Two mines
 Are underneath—when will you see the signs?
 Hurry now! It is just a rented place—
 Grab an axe and then chop off its firm base,
 So you might reach the mine that's down below
 And then need no more patches brought to sew.
 What's patching? Bread and water—as you ate,
 You patched a cloak that holds down with its weight.
 Your body's cloak gets torn each moment, then 2555
 Through eating you will patch it up again.
 You're offspring of the lofty, fortunate king—
 Be your true self. Feel shame at patch-sewing!
 Dig up a patch from this store's floor and view
 The two mines that reveal themselves to you,
 Before the building's lease expires without
 You trying any of its fine fruit out.
 The owner will evict you then and break
 Its structure down, for that more prized mine's sake.
 Then, in regret, you'll beat your own head and 2560
 Tear out your silly beard with your own hand.
 'This store was mine, but I was blind!' you'll sigh,
 'I never tasted fruit from here, did I?'
 The wind has blown my being away. In store
 Is *sorrow for God's slaves** for evermore.

How Man is deluded by the knowledge and imaginings of his base nature and does not seek knowledge of the Unseen, which is the knowledge of the Prophets.

I saw in my house countless images
 And fell in love, smitten with restlessness.
 The hidden gold I couldn't understand
 Or else the axe would have stayed in my hand.
 If I had used the axe then properly, 2565
 I might have now escaped from misery.
 I turned my eyes to pictures and then fell
 In love like children under something's spell.
 Sana'i said it in one of his sayings:
 'You are a child; the house is full of paintings.'
 In his *Hadiqat* his advice is true—
 Raise the dust from your self without ado!

'Moses, enough!' Pharaoh said, 'Now, please tell
 The third prize! My heart's floundering in this spell.'
 'That third's a twofold empire where you'll see 2570
 Two worlds without a single enemy,
 Greater than this realm you possess down here
 Since there it's peaceful; here there's war each year.
 See what in peacetime That One will bestow
 When during war He gave you this below,
 For that bestowal when you were a rebel
 Gave so much—look what you'll gain when you're loyal.'
 'What is the fourth one, Moses? I implore—
 Be quick! My patience fails as I yearn more.'
 'The fourth's that you stay young eternally 2575
 With jet-black hair and rosy cheeks. Trust me.
 Colour and scent are worthless to our kind,
 But I speak at your level, far behind.
 Feeling so proud of scents, a home, and colours,
 Entices only children, not their fathers.'

Explanation of the tradition: 'Speak to people according to their level of intelligence, not in accordance with your own level, so that God and His Messenger do not mislead.'

My work is with a child on this occasion,
 So I must use the language of mere children
 And say, 'Attend school, then I'll buy for you
 A bird, or nuts and raisins, if you do.'
 You only know about youth and the body— 2580
 Take this youth and take barley then, you donkey!
 No wrinkle will appear upon your face,
 Your youthfulness will stay fresh, and no trace
 Of ugliness or old age will be visible,
 Nor will your cypress stature get bent double,
 Nor will your young man's strength feel a decrease,
 Nor in your teeth will there be cavities,
 Nor will your sexual lust's skills see reduction,
 Or women weary of your failed erection—
 Youth's glory will then open up to you 2585
 As Okkasha swung heaven's gates thus, too.*

The Prophet's saying: 'Whoever brings me good news about the ending of the month of Safar, I'll give him good news about entry to paradise.'

The passing of Mohammad long ago
 Fell in Rabe' al-awwal, as all know.
 When his heart learned the timing of departure,
 Through his own wisdom he experienced rapture.
 When Safar* came he felt extremely happy
 And said, 'Next month I will begin my journey.'
 Yearning for guidance every night till day,
 'Most High Companion of the path!' he'd pray.
 'Whoever's first to let me know about 2590
 When the blessed month of Safar's time runs out,
 When Rabe' starts right at the end of Safar,
 I'll give good news and be his intercessor.'
 Okkasha rushed to say: 'Safar is over!'
 'Okkasha, heaven will be yours forever.'

‘Safar has passed!’ another came to state—
 ‘Okkasha won good news’s fruit. Too late!’
 Real men rejoice as this world’s time has passed,
 While children celebrate if it should last.
 Blind birds who’ve never tasted the clear water
 Imagine brine to be as good as Kawsar.*

2595

Moses told of the gifts of grace, all four:
 ‘Your fortune’s drink will turn to dregs no more.’
 Pharaoh said, ‘You have spoken well. Now I
 Will first consult a good friend, then reply.’

Pharaoh consulted his wife Asiya about believing in Moses.

He shared these words with Asiya, who said:
 ‘Black heart, surrender with your soul. Ahead
 Good fortune is what this fine speech will bring
 To you, so gain it quickly, virtuous king.
 Sowing’s hour has arrived; much will be gained.’
 She said this and wept wildly, unrestrained,
 Then sprang up and said, ‘Now the radiant sun
 Has turned into your crown, bald man. Well done!’
 (Hats cover baldness’s deficiency,
 When it’s the radiant sun especially.)
 ‘When at your meeting you heard what he said,
 Why didn’t you scream, “Yes!” and pray instead?
 If this great speech had reached the bright sun’s ear,
 It would have started chasing it down here.
 Don’t you know what you have been promised? Learn.
 God is now showing Satan His concern.
 When that most kind one called you back, it’s strange
 How your heart stayed the same and did not change.
 How did it not split open, so you’d gain
 A glance of both worlds? How did it remain?’

2600

2605

The heart that for God’s sake at once splits open
 Eats fruit in both worlds like the martyr’s own one.

Blindness and heedlessness are good when they
 Help you spend time here—why prolong your stay?
 They are both graces since they keep you here 2610
 To build your capital for when you're near.
 Too much is sickness with no remedy,
 Poison for souls, haunting minds easily.
 About a marketplace which person knows
 Where one can buy a rose bush with one rose?
 Where for one seed a hundred groves are sold?
 A hundred mines bought with one scrap of gold?
 '*He is for God*' is when with scraps you pay,
 So '*God is for him*'* then comes into play,
 Because our own unstable, weak existence 2615
 Emerged through the Eternal Maker's essence,
 So when the former dies in Him, it then
 Becomes eternal and won't die again.
 It's like a drop which dust and wind both scare
 Because it perishes due to this pair.
 When it dives in the sea, which is its source,
 It flees winds, dust, and solar heat of course.
 Inside the sea its form is lost from sight,
 Its essence is preserved though, kept upright.
 O drop, give up yourself without commotion, 2620
 With no regret, for you will gain an ocean.
 Drop, give yourself this fine nobility,
 Become secure from death within the sea.
 Who should be now so lucky—from the top
 The ocean is requesting a mere drop!
 For God's sake, make this purchase rapidly—
 For one drop you can gain a pearl-filled sea.
 By God, you shouldn't wait, but you should race!
 This speech comes from God's Bounteous Ocean's Grace.
 All other graces disappear in this one, 2625
 The least of which soars to the seventh heaven.
 A falcon has reached you that is so stunning,
 One that will not be found by busily hunting.

'I'll speak with Haman,' Pharaoh said, 'It's clear

A king should ask advice from his vizier.
 She said, 'Don't share this secret with that Haman—
 What would a blind crone know about a falcon?'

*Story about the king's falcon and the decrepit crone.**

If you should give a crone a fine, white falcon,
 From kindness she will try to trim each talon.
 It needs its talons so that it can hunt; 2630
 The blind crone trims them, for she's ignorant,
 And says, 'Where was your mother? It is wrong
 For talons to be left to grow so long.'
 She trims its talons, wings and beak as well—
 This is what wretches do in their love's spell.
 The falcon won't eat when she gives it stew,
 So she gets angry, stops her kindness too,
 Saying, 'I cooked you stew that tasted lovely,
 But you have shown disdain and acted smugly,
 So you deserve your suffering and affliction; 2635
 You don't deserve God's bounty and good fortune.'
 She gives it the stew's broth and tells it, 'Eat!
 Maybe you just don't like the balls of wheat?'
 The broth does not fit with the falcon's nature,
 So she then frowns and her rage just grows greater.
 She pours on it broth hot enough to scald
 And that poor falcon's crown then ends up bald.
 The scalding sends tears from its eyes that sting
 And it recalls the kindness of its king;
 From those sweet, flirting eyes tears flow at pace, 2640
 Eyes with perfections through the ruler's face,
 Eyes that *don't turn round* wounded by a crow's,*
 The good eye suffers from the evil's blows.
 That eye has the sea's breadth of vision where
 The two worlds look no more than one thin hair.
 Thousands of spheres may enter in its vision,
 But disappear like fountains in the ocean.
 This eye's transcended the whole realm of senses;
 Through sight of the Unseen it has won kisses.
 I cannot find a single ear that I 2645

Can tell the finer points about this eye.
 If from it glorious water were to trickle,
 Gabriel would try to catch hold of a little,
 To rub it on his own wings if that person
 Of truest creed were to give his permission.

The falcon says, 'Though that crone's rage blazed bright,
 It hasn't burned my dignity and light.
 My spirit's falcon weaves a hundred forms still.'
 Saleh was not hurt—they just hurt his camel;*
 One marvellous breath from Saleh sends the grace 2650
 For mountains to send hundreds in its place.
 'Be silent! Pay attention!' says my heart,
 'Or jealousy will tear your frame apart.'
 Huge clemencies hide in His jealousy—
 If not He'd burn our world up instantly.

Pharaoh's pride made him choose to turn away
 From her advice; his heart moved from her sway.
 'I'll talk with Haman first,' then Pharaoh said,
 'For he's my power's axis and my aide.'
 (Bu Bakr was Mohammad's counsellor, 2655
 Bu Lahab was Bu Jahl's—they're similar.)*
 Since a deep-rooted likeness drew them near
 And her advice seemed ugly to his ear.
 Like goes towards like with a hundred wings
 And breaks chains through its own imaginings.

*Story about that woman whose child crawled onto a waterspout
 and was in danger of falling, and how she sought help
 from Ali.*

A woman saw Ali and came to shout:
 'My child has gone up to that waterspout!
 He won't come near my grasp although I call,
 And if I leave him I'm afraid he'll fall.

He can't yet understand it when I say: 2660
 "Come back to mother, out then of harm's way!"
 He doesn't understand hand signals too;
 He acts as if he doesn't have a clue.
 For feeding I would show my breast, but he
 Just turned the other way so cluelessly.
 You noble ones are those who give support
 In this world and the next to my poor sort—
 My heart is trembling. For God's sake, I pray
 You rescue him before he's swept away.
 'Take to the roof another child,' he said, 2665
 'So yours sees one just like himself ahead,
 Then he will start to rush to his own kind
 Back from that spout—like's drawn to like, you'll find.'
 The woman did this. Once her son had seen
 His own kind, he approached from where he'd been
 And reached the safety of the roof. Consider
 Similar things attractors of each other.
 He crawled towards the other child, and so
 He managed to avoid a fall below.
 Prophets are humans due to this, no doubt— 2670
 So other humans likewise flee the spout.
 Mohammad said he's human *just like you*,*
 So you'd approach him and not fall off too.
 Homogeneity's a strong attractor;
 There's an attractor drawing every searcher.
 Jesus and Edris soared to heaven. They
 Became the same as angels in some way.
 Harut and Marut both leaned to what's bodily,
 So they fell from a station that was lofty.

Infidels all belong to Satan's kind; 2675
 Their souls are demons' students and unkind;
 They've learnt a million wicked ways and try
 To sew shut their own heart and mind's good eye,
 And their least ugly single quality
 Is envy, which struck Satan fatally.
 That's where they picked up envy and their spite—

He wants to block men from God's kingdom's light.
When he sees someone perfect is around
He suffers pain because of what he's found.
Every wretch whose light's snuffed out hates to see 2680
Others with candles burning gloriously.
Acquire perfection so you won't turn evil,
Upset at the success of other people.
Beg God to now repel from you this envy,
So He can liberate you from the body,
Then keep you inwardly preoccupied,
For you won't be distracted then outside.
God gives to draughts of wine the potency
To make drunks flee from both worlds totally,
And He has given to hashish the power 2685
To help flee self-awareness for an hour.
God gives to sleep the power to pull away
All your attention from the two worlds' sway.
He changed Majnun through love of Layli so
Love stopped him knowing who was friend from foe.
He has more wines just like this by the millions
Which He lets dominate your sense perceptions.
And from the self there are wines of damnation
Which drive the ill-starred from the right location.
The pure mind has wines of felicity 2690
Which find the place one can stay permanently:
Drunk, it will rip the tent of this world's sky,
Then the illumined mind soars up on high.
Don't be deceived by every drunkard, heart!
Tell drunken Jesus and the ass apart.
Seek wine from these vats that give drunkenness
That can't be matched by those worth so much less.
Each loved thing's like a full vat—they contain
Pearl-pure wine drops or just dregs that remain.
Wine connoisseur, you have to taste with care 2695
To find wine not adulterated there.
Both kinds make men drunk, but this drunkenness
Will take you up to Judgement's Lord, no less,
So you can flee all thoughts, false schemes, and whispering,
Freed from the mind's chains, like a camel skipping.

Prophets are all from the angelic realm—
 That's how from down here they attracted them.
 Wind is like fire and joins it as a friend—
 For both of them their nature's to ascend.
 If you seal up a pot though it is empty 2700
 And place it in a river, you will then see
 That pot will never sink, but just floats there
 Because inside that pot there's only air,
 And since air's nature is to move up, it
 Pulls its container up along with it.
 The souls which are like Prophets' similarly
 Are pulled like shadows to them powerfully;
 Since their intelligence prevails, no doubt
 That's what the angels share with the devout.
 The carnal soul prevails in every foe; 2705
 That soul is base and so they head below.
 Egyptians were like Pharaoh, who drew blame;
 The Jews and Moses were one and the same.
 Haman was more like Pharaoh with his malice;
 Pharaoh chose him and brought him to his palace—
 He dragged him to the bottom of the well,
 Since both were of the denizens of hell.
 They both oppose light and are set ablaze
 Like hellfire; they oppose the heart's light rays.
 'Believer, pass through quickly!' hell will shout, 2710
 For your light makes its flames all soon go out.
 'Move on, believer: when it trails its hem
 Your light extinguishes each one of them.'
 That hell-bound one flees light as well, for he
 Has hellfire's nature also tragically.
 Hell flees from the believers and their light
 Just as they flee from it with all their might,
 For their light lacks compatibility;
 Seekers of light oppose fire actually.
 The Prophet said, 'When the believers pray 2715
 For God to keep them far from hell, that way
 Hell seeks protection from those persons too,
 Praying, "O God, keep him far, I beg you!"'
 Attractions found with congenity—

Are you with faith or infidelity?
 You're Haman's kind if to him you incline,
 But if you lean to Moses, that's divine.
 And if you lean to both of them, my brother,
 You have both self and wisdom mixed together.
 They are at war. You must strive through its storms 2720
 So spiritual things dominate mere forms.
 To feel joy in the world of war, what's needed
 Is witnessing your enemy defeated.

That one who always argued finally
 Consulted Haman on this mystery.
 He told what Moses promised on that day
 And took as confidant one far astray.

Pharaoh consults his vizier Haman about believing in Moses.

Pharaoh told Haman when he saw him there;
 Haman ripped his own shirt, jumped in the air—
 That cursed one's screams were heard from all around 2725
 As he threw his own headgear on the ground:
 'How dare he speak like that to Pharaoh's face,
 Brazenly with vain words? He's a disgrace!
 You have subdued the whole world, truth be told.
 Through fortune all your work has turned to gold.
 Rulers bring tribute to you from each nation
 Without resistance, with no contestation.
 Kings kiss your threshold's dust so happily,
 O Kayqobad-like king with majesty!*
 And when our horse is seen by those of foes, 2730
 They gallop off without the need for blows.
 You have been worshipped in this world till now—
 Will you turn to the least of slaves somehow?
 To walk in flames is a much better thing
 Than to turn to a slave when you're a king.
 O king of China even, first kill me
 So my eyes won't see such a tragedy.
 Chop off my head first, Khosrow of our nation,*

So my eyes don't see that humiliation.
 Nothing like this has happened. I don't lie. 2735
 It is like sky becoming land, land sky,
 Or slaves becoming equals suddenly,
 Or cowards starting to fight fearlessly,
 Or foes seeing well while friends don't see a bit,
 Or for our garden to become a pit.'

Showing the falseness of Haman's speech.

He couldn't tell his friend from enemy;
 He played this backgammon pathetically.
 You were your own foe, cursed one, so don't name
 The innocent as foes. They're not to blame.
 Wickedness to you is 'good fortune', 'luck'— 2740
 It starts with gallops, ends with being struck.
 If you don't leave this fortune straight away,
 Autumn will soon move spring out of the way.
 The East and West have witnessed far too many
 Just like you with head severed from their body.
 How could the East and West, which are both transient,
 Cause anybody to become more permanent.
 You take pride in the fact that out of fear
 And bondage people flatter you now here.
 When people should prostrate in front of someone, 2745
 They stuff inside that person's soul some poison.
 And when that one prostrating turns away,
 The poison's seen while he is on his way.
 Happy the one whose self *has been brought low*;
 The one pride made feel huge must suffer woe;
 This arrogance is poison that is deadly—
 The fool gets drunk on poisonous wine too readily.
 When he drinks it for just a little while
 He'll swing his head with joy and start to smile,
 But then the poison enters in his soul 2750
 And it begins to take complete control.
 If you don't think it's poisonous, or debate
 What poison is, heed the Aad people's fate.
 When two kings fight, the one that should prevail

Will kill the other or throw him in gaol,
But if he finds a fallen enemy,
He bandages him and gives liberally.
If this pride isn't a most poisonous thing,
Why kill the innocent, you murderous king,
And why treat one well who's no one to you— 2755
You can detect the poison through these two.
The highwayman will never rob a beggar;
The wolf won't bite into a dead wolf either.
Khezzr damaged that boat, so it could be saved
From hands of people who were so deprived.
The broken flee—get broken straight away!
Safety's in poverty, so head that way!
The mountain that held precious mines in it
Shattered to bits when axes finally hit.
The sword's for necks; it is so useless though 2760
For shadows they cast which can't feel a blow.
O lost one, grandeur's fire and oil, so why
Do you walk into flames with nose raised high?
Arrows won't target someone lying flat
Upon the ground, so please reflect on that.
But if he lifts his head up, he'll be slain
Like targets—his wounds won't be healed again.
The vulgar's ladder's egotism, friend,
But that is where they fall from in the end.
Those who climb higher have less understanding— 2765
Their bones will break much more on their hard landing.
And this derived flaw's rooted in the fact
You're trying to partner God by your proud act.
You haven't died then been revived again
Through Him—you're seeking equal lordship then.
But if revived through Him, since that is Him,
It's purest union, not polytheism.
Seek explanations in good action's mirror
For you won't understand it through mere chatter.
If I share what I've written, then each heart 2770
Immediately will bleed and split apart.
I'll stop, for wise men this much will suffice;
To check if someone's home I've shouted twice.

To sum up, through the wicked things he'd say
 Haman waylaid his Pharaoh in this way.
 Good fortune's morsel reached his lips, but he
 Opted to slit his own throat suddenly.
 Haman gave Pharaoh's harvest-stack away—
 May no kings have such friends who act this way!

Moses despaired of Pharaoh's accepting the faith because of the effect of Haman's words on Pharaoh's heart.

Moses said, 'We've shown kindness and much grace. 2775
 It wasn't something fate let you embrace.
 Consider lordship that is not upright
 As having no real power and no real might.
 Lordship that has been stolen is a lie,
 Because it doesn't have heart, soul, or eye.
 Lordship given by ordinary men,
 Like loans, will be one day called in again.
 Give God the lordship that you got on loan,
 So He gives a full contract of His own.'

The dispute of the Arab leaders with Mohammad when they said, 'Divide the kingdom up with us to avoid dispute,' to which the chosen one responded: 'I have been put in charge regarding this realm,' and their arguments from both sides.

One day the Arab tribal chiefs had gathered 2780
 And started arguing before Mohammad:
 'You are a chief, but so are we,' they said,
 'Take your share and divide this realm instead.
 Through our own share we each want just what's fair.
 Wash your hands clear of what's another's share.'
 'God gave to me the leadership you crave;
 The absolute command is what He gave.
 "It is Mohammad's epoch now," God said,
 "Accept his order or *fear God with dread!*" '*
 'We, too, are leaders due to destiny; 2785

God gave us leadership's role similarly.'
Mohammad said, 'But my one was bestowed,
While yours were loaned as food while on the road.
Mine lasts until the end of time. A loan
Like your rule will one day be overthrown.'
They said, 'Please don't continue like a bore.
What evidence supports your seeking more?'
Immediately a cloud came on command
And a wild torrent filled up all the land.
They headed for the populated city 2790
Where terrified men wailed and begged for pity.
Mohammad said, 'The time has come for action,
So certainty is born from supposition.'
Each tribal chief threw his spear as a test,
To block the flood if they were truly blessed.
Mohammad threw his rod in the same way,
That rod which gave no choice but to obey.
The torrent raged on and would not subside,
Sweeping like straw the spears they'd thrown inside.
Their spears all disappeared; his rod on entry 2795
Had stayed upright as if it was a sentry,
And it gave that wild torrent such concern
That it withdrew then, never to return.
On witnessing that he was truly blessed
With power, the chiefs grew frightened and confessed,
Apart from three with such strong enmity
That in denial they called this sorcery.
Kingship that has been grafted on is feeble,
But that which grows organically is noble.
Though you've not seen the spears and rod, you can 2800
Compare their names with his names, my good man.
Death's rapid torrent swept their names away;
His fortune and his name will always stay.
For his sake each day they will beat the drums
Five times until the very last day comes.

He said, 'If you've brains, you'll see I've been kind;
If you're an ass, my rod's for your behind.

I'll force you from the stable in a way
 That makes your head and ears bleed. You can't stay.
 Inside this stable, no man and no donkey 2805
 Is finding a safe haven from your cruelty.
 My rod is to reform and see improved;
 It is for donkeys who are not approved.
 It will be serpent-like as it subdues,
 For you've become one in the way you choose
 To act—you're of the serpents from the mountains,
 But look up at the serpent of the heavens.
 This rod has come to give a taste of hell:
 "Hey, scarper to the light!" the rod will yell,
 "Or you'll remain in my teeth permanently 2810
 And you will not be able then to flee."
 It's then a serpent, though it was a rod,
 So you won't ask, "Where is the hell of God?"

*Explaining why someone who knows the power of God will not ask:
 'Where are heaven and hell?'*

Wheresoever God wishes He makes there
 His hell—He makes the zenith a bird's snare.
 He makes your teeth begin to ache as well,
 So you might say, 'It's dragon-like. It's hell!'
 Or He makes your saliva honey-sweet,
 So you say, 'This is heaven and a treat.'
 From your teeth's roots He can make sugar grow— 2815
 The power of God's decree you then will know.
 So don't bite with your teeth the innocent.
 Remember that strike which you can't prevent.
 As blood for the Egyptians, God selected
 The Nile, yet He kept Israelites protected,
 So you'll know God discriminates between
 The sober and the drunk who're clearly seen.
 God's grace had taught the Nile to tell apart:
 They closed to foes, for friends the waves would part;
 His grace had made those waves intelligent; 2820
 His wrath made Cain a fool who's ignorant.
 His grace gave what's inert intelligence;

His wrath took it from learned men at once.
 His grace has made it show inside the former;
 As punishment it fled from every scholar.
 It poured down like the rain due to His order,
 And likewise it escaped on seeing God's anger.
 The sun, moon, stars, and clouds all come and go
 In a planned order witnessed from below;
 They come at their appointed time, not late, 2825
 Nor early. There's no rushing and no wait.
 You're blind to what God's Prophets have all shown—
 They put this knowledge into wood and stone,
 To show inert things by analogy
 Can be like rods and stones through His decree.
 Through rod and stone, obedience makes things clear
 About the rest of the inert things here:
 'We're well aware of God and we obey.
 We're not haphazard, useless things,' they say,
 Just like the waves which then could tell apart 2830
 The two groups, when to drown and when to part.
 Just like the earth, which showed you what it knows,
 Sinking Korah, whom God subdued with blows,
 Just like the moon, which heard the order and
 Split into two halves quickly on command,*
 Just like the rocks and trees which audibly
 Greeted Mohammad in proximity.

The response to the materialist who denies God's existence and considers the world eternal.

'The world is transient,' yesterday one said,
 'God is still there when all the skies are dead.'
 Then a philosopher said, 'You can't know; 2835
 Rain can't tell that a cloud's about to go.
 You're not a spinning mote now even to
 Know the sun's temporality, are you?
 How can a worm in dung now comprehend
 The earth's beginning and when it will end?
 You've taken all this blindly from your father;
 Through foolishness you've got entangled further.

What is the proof for temporality?
 Explain or shut up. Don't talk endlessly!
 He said, 'I heard two groups the other day
 Arguing in this deep sea, and their fray
 Drew a large number to each one's position,
 All fighting, arguing in opposition.
 I went towards the crowd that gathered there
 And listened to learn more of their affair.
 "The heavens are just transient," one was saying,
 "No doubt there was a builder for this building."
 "It is eternal," then another said,
 "No builders here; it built itself instead."
 The first said, "You've denied our own Creator
 Who night and day feeds us as our Provider."
 The second answered, "When no evidence
 Is given, I won't heed fools' ignorance.
 So bring some proofs, for I won't give my ear
 Unless you bring some evidence that's clear."
 "The proof is in my soul. It is concealed
 Inside me. It's not easily revealed.
 You cannot see the new moon, though I see
 Because your eye's weak. Don't get mad at me!"

"Then the debate continued and those near
 Grew dizzy thinking of the turning sphere.
 The latter said, "The proof's in me, so I
 Have proof about the transience of the sky.
 I've certainty; the sign for this is plain:
 I can walk into fire and not feel pain.
 Words can't explain this proof; it is above
 Their limit like the lover's state of love.
 The inner side of my view leaves no trace
 Other than my most gaunt and sickly face.
 Blood and tears both roll down my cheeks at once,
 Becoming thus His beauty's evidence."
 "I don't consider them proofs that could be
 Clear evidence to the generality."
 "When real and false coins fight," the other argued,

“Saying: ‘You’re fake while I am highly valued,’
The final test is fire: when they’re both thrown
Into the flames the truth will then be known.
Everyone will know their reality,
Move from suspicion’s doubts to certainty.
Water and fire are tests that must be taken 2860
For real and false coins not to be mistaken—
Let’s both walk into flames and thus be used
As proof for all the rest, who are confused,
Or else jump in the sea from a high roof,
So that for them all we can serve as proof.”
They chose to enter flames as their dared feat
And cast themselves into its scorching heat.
That man who spoke of God was saved that day,
While that vile bastard was just burned away.
Listen to what muezzins all convey 2865
Despite what the transgressors have to say.
Death hasn’t burned this name out totally
Because its bearer had such majesty.
For centuries those wagers that they play
Have torn the veils of the deniers away.
Once they both pledged, what’s true gained victory
Regarding miracles, eternity.
I came to see that he who spoke about
The sky’s temporality indeed won out.’

Deniers’ proofs are always left undone; 2870
Where is one sign of their truth? Find me one.
Where can you find a single minaret
Praising deniers? I’ve not found one yet.
Where can you find a pulpit where a preacher
Recounts the life of a vile unbeliever?
Coin faces serve as proof as well, my friend,
By bearing their names up until the end:
The coins of kings keep being changed, but see
Mohammad’s coin last an eternity.
Show me the name of any vile denier 2875
Etched on a gold coin or a coin of silver.

Here is a sun-like miracle, so look:
 Men's tongues call it '*The mother of the book*'.*
 None dares steal one word from inside its cover
 And no one dares to add to it another.
 Befriend the conqueror so that you today
 Prevail. Don't join the conquered, wandering stray!
 Deniers argue this way: 'I don't see
 Another homeland near externally.'
 He doesn't know that each thing that's apparent 2880
 Serves as deep hidden wisdom's own informant;
 The point of each external thing's within
 Just like the benefit of medicine.

*Exegesis of the Qur'anic verse: 'We did not create the heavens
 and the earth and what is between them other than with
 reality,* meaning that we did not create them for the sake of
 what you see, but for the inner meaning and eternal wisdom
 which you don't see.*

Does any painter paint without an aim
 To see fulfilled? Would he paint all the same?
 It's for the guests' and youngsters' benefit—
 They can escape anxiety through it.
 From that one's painting comes such pleasure to
 The youth, memories of long-lost friendships too.
 Is any pot made by a skilful potter 2885
 For its own sake and not to carry water?
 Do bowl-makers make bowls for their own sake
 And not for food when they wish to partake?
 And do calligraphers write beautifully
 For their art or for readers all to see?
 The outward form is for the Unseen's, friend,
 And for another that form will transcend—
 Count the third, fourth to tenth, increasingly
 Of higher worth, to your capacity.
 And like the skilful move good chess players make, 2890
 The benefit's in the next step they'll take:
 They placed it here for that next, hidden one,
 And that move's for the next one, and so on.

Continue till checkmate when you're the winner,
 Having seen one face hidden in another.
 The first is for the second's sake; it's similar
 To climbing up the rungs of any ladder.
 The second's for the third's sake, and the proof
 Is after all those rungs you'll reach the roof.
 Desire to eat is to make semen, so 2895
 You'll procreate and consequently glow.
 One with poor vision sees naught else around;
 His mind can't travel, like plants in the ground.
 Whether the plant is called or not, that will
 Not matter for it's stuck in firm soil still.
 If its head moves with wind, don't be misled
 Simply because it has a moving head.
 'We heard, O breeze!' its head is heard to say,
 But its foot says, '*Leave us. We won't obey.*'
 Since he can't travel that man has to act 2900
 Like others, but it's from blind trust in fact,
 Fighting like that, going with what will happen,
 As if obeying dice throws in backgammon.

Those visions that aren't in a frozen state
 Are piercers of the veils and penetrate.
 To vision like that something now appears
 Though it won't happen until ten more years;
 According to men's sight's capacity
 The future and Unseen's seen similarly.
 When there is nowhere in the way a screen, 2905
 Eyes penetrate the Tablet that's unseen.
 When looking back to Being's origin,
 One then sees clearly how things did begin:
 The angels arguing with God when He
 Made our forefather His own deputy.*
 When looking forward one will have clear vision
 Of all that happens in the Resurrection,
 The origin of origins behind,
 Ahead the Final Day for all Mankind.
 To his heart's light's capacity each seeker 2910

Sees the Unseen if he has cleaned his mirror—
 Whoever's polished more sees more, and all
 The forms will be for him more visible.
 You say serenity is from God's grace—
 Success in polishing's from the same place.
 Striving and prayer match with your aspiration:
*Man has naught more than that for which he's striven.**
 Your aspiration comes from God alone;
 No base one will aspire to a king's throne.
 If God assigns work to a man, he still 2915
 Can show obedience, choice, and his free will.
 But when He brings ill-fated ones much grief,
 They run away from Him to disbelief.
 When God gives grief to someone truly fortunate,
 He draws much closer to God and more intimate.
 Through mortal fear, the cowards in the fight
 Have opted for the means for rapid flight.
 Through mortal fear as well, the ones with bravery
 Have battled ever closer to the enemy:
 Fear and grief made the brave hearts charge ahead; 2920
 Through fear the cowards die within instead.
 Such mortal fear and grief are touchstones—you
 Can tell the cowards from the valiant few.

*God communicated to Moses, 'O Moses, I who am the Exalted
 Creator love you.'*

God said to Moses through heart inspiration:
 'I'm God. I love you, Moses, whom I've chosen.'
 Moses asked, 'What did I do to deserve it,
 O Generous One? Tell me and I'll augment it.'
 'You're like a little child with his own mother—
 When she is angry he'll still reach to hug her.
 He knows no other friend to reach out to, 2925
 Both drunken and hung-over from her, too.
 And if his mother should give him a slap,
 He'll still come for a hug perched on her lap.
 He won't seek help from any other people;
 She's all the good he knows and all the evil.

You don't turn to alternative directions
 Whether in good or troubling situations.
 The others are like rocks or bricks to you,
 Young boys, grown men, and those in dotage too.'

Just as *it's You we worship** with full passion, 2930
 We don't *seek help** elsewhere in tribulation;
 '*It's You we worship**' means exclusively;
 Its function's to remove hypocrisy.
 '*It's You we seek help from**' is similar,
 Making appeals for help much narrower;
 'We worship just for Your sake' it makes known,
 'We also yearn for help from You alone.'

*A king gets angry with his boon companion and an intercessor
 intercedes on behalf of the object of his anger, begging the king
 to be forgiving. The king accepts his intercession, but the boon
 companion is annoyed with the intercessor and asks, 'Why did
 you intercede?'*

A king got angry with his boon companion
 And was about to make him food for carrion:
 He drew his sword out to make this man pay, 2935
 To strike him since he dared to disobey.
 No one there had the nerve to intervene
 By interceding, all except one keen
 To try, one called Emad al-Molk, who mattered,
 Privileged with intercession like Mohammad.
 He sprang up and prostrated hurriedly;
 The king put down his sword immediately:
 'If he's the Devil, I'll forgive,' he said,
 'If he's done evil, I'll conceal instead.
 I'm satisfied now that you have stepped in, 2940
 Even if he's caused damage with his sin.
 I'd end a million rages all at once
 For you have that much worth and excellence.
 I never will reject your intercession,

Since your appeal is mine as well for certain.
 Even if he'd made earth and sky collide,
 I would have spared him since you're on his side.
 If every atom had appealed instead,
 But not you, that would not have saved his head.
 And we don't place on you an obligation, 2945
 Rather we show you glory, boon companion.
 You didn't do this; it was really me.
 Your attributes are inside me, you see.
 And in this action you are not the actor,
 For you are born through me and not the mother.'
 It's like '*when you just threw you did not throw*';*
 Like foam you give yourself to the wave's flow.
 You've turned to '*no*'; settle next to '*except*'.*
 You're both prince and the prisoner that is kept.
 You didn't give it; that King did of course. 2950
 Only He is. *God knows best the right course.*

That boon companion who fled anger's blow
 Was angry with the intercessor though.
 He ended then his friendship; on the street
 He'd turn to face a wall so they'd not meet.
 He left his intercessor, cut all ties.
 People began to gossip in surprise,
 Saying, 'If he's not mad, why did he end
 All contact with his saviour and good friend?
 He saved him. He would then have been beheaded. 2955
 He should be humble now and feel indebted.
 He's done the opposite and got so mad,
 Resenting the best friend he's ever had.'
 Someone reproached him, saying: 'Why do you
 Treat badly one you should feel grateful to?
 That special friend has saved your life—his crime
 Is sparing your beheading at that time.
 If he'd done evil, you still shouldn't leave him;
 He actually was good to you—believe him.'
 He said, 'For the king's sake life's easily given— 2960
 Why should he intercede and be so driven?

Mohammad said, "*I had with God* time others
Could not have too, though also Prophet brothers."
 Apart from that King's blows I want no mercy,
 And I do not seek any other sanctuary.
 I have negated others, for at stake
 Is serving that King, one chance I must take.
 If the King should behead me now in anger,
 He will then give me sixty more lives after.
 My work's to gamble with my head, be selfless; 2965
 My King's work's to bestow life on the headless.'

Kudos to heads chopped off by the king's hand;
 Shame on those who give others head and hand.
 The night the king has made pitch-black displays
 Disdain for thousands of the bright Eid days.
 Seers of the king have circumambulation
 Beyond grace, unbelief, wrath, and religion.
 It is beyond words, so it can't be written,
 For it is hidden more than all things hidden.
 Those names and words, despite being praised, have all 2970
 Been made through human beings visible.
 '*He taught the names*'* led Adam to the light,
 But not through words and letters that we write.
 The moment Adam turned terrestrial,
 It lowered names that were celestial,
 For they donned veils of letters and sounds spoken,
 So in this world their meanings could be open.
 Although from one view speech is a revealer,
 From others it's a veil and a concealer.

*Abraham replies to Gabriel when he asks him, 'Do you have any
 needs?' by saying, 'Needs from you? No.'*

'I'm Abraham in this age and he's Gabriel; 2975
 I don't want him as guide when I'm in trouble.'
 He didn't learn from Gabriel due respect,
 The latter had asked Abraham's request:

‘Do you want something? Can I help some way?

If not, then I will quickly rush away.’

Abraham said, ‘No, go away now, please.

I’ve vision; I loathe intermediaries.’

Linking believers, that emissary

Is in this world as intermediary.

If all could hear divine communication,

2980

Why would we have words, sounds, and revelation?

Although he is effaced in God and selfless,

My case is more refined, so don’t neglect this.

His action is the same as the king’s action,

But good appears bad in my rare affliction:

What to most men is the most perfect grace,

Is wrath to those in a much higher place.

The former must endure much pain and anguish,

So that they can perceive this and distinguish,

For intervening words, O Cave Companion,*

2985

Are thorns to somebody who has reached union.

Pain, grief, and patience are all prerequisites

To go beyond all words, for purest spirits.

But some have just grown deafer and don’t hear,

While others soared up to a higher sphere.

This grief is like the water of the Nile:

Water to blessed ones, bloodbath for the vile.

You’re more blessed if you see the destination:

If more crop’s seen that sparks more cultivation,

For sowing in this world will lead the way

2990

To bigger harvests on the Final Day.

No contract was made for its own sake, was it?

Contracts are for being placed to make a profit.

There’s no denier, if you should look closely,

Who was denying for denial’s sake only—

It was to conquer foes in jealousy

Or self-display or for supremacy.

Supremacism has its own desire:

Forms that lack meaning never can inspire.

You ask, ‘Why are you doing this? Shed light.’

2995

Because the form is oil, the meaning light.
 Why ask: 'What is the point?' Why's that unknown
 If forms are for their own form's sake alone?
 Asking about the point is a good question;
 'Why?' is wrong though for any other reason.
 If it is only for its own sake, then
 Why do you wish to know its point, good men?
 It therefore isn't wise, but a mistake
 To think all things are here for their own sake.
 If there's no God, why are things ordered clearly?
 If there is one, then can His acts be empty?
 No one draws on the bathhouse walls for mere fun:
 Rightly or wrongly there must be a reason.

3000

*Moses asks God, 'Why did You create creatures and destroy them'
 and the arrival of the answer.*

Moses once asked God, 'Master of the Reckoning,
 You made these forms, so why are You now wrecking?
 You made the male and female pairs so gorgeous,
 So why do you destroy them? For what purpose?'
 'I know your question's not from heedlessness,
 Or unbelief or lust and greediness,
 Otherwise I'd chastise you straight away
 And make sure that for this you'll later pay.
 What you seek rather is for comprehension
 Of secrets of subsistence through my action,
 So you can teach the everyday men and
 Make them less raw once they all understand.
 Intentionally you asked so you can show
 To those who don't know, though you clearly know.'
 Questioning is half of knowledge—this is true
 But it's not something all outsiders do.
 From knowledge, question and response arose—
 From soil and water grow both thorn and rose.
 From knowledge, guidance and perdition grew:
 Bitter and sweet fruit both need moisture, too.
 Acquaintance leads to love and hate as well;

3005

3010

Rich food gives strength, but makes some men unwell.
 Moses became a foreigner who seeks it,
 So he could tell those unaware the secret:
 Let's make ourselves seem like outsiders, too,
 And draw the answers as the strangers do.
 Ass sellers turn to rivals and start fighting 3015
 When they seek the same contract sealed in writing.

God carried on, 'O wisdom's own possessor,
 Since you asked you can hear from Me the answer.
 Now cultivate seeds in the soil, O Moses,
 So you as well might truly do this justice.'
 Once Moses had completed all his sowing
 And the corn ears completed all their growing,
 He grabbed a scythe to cut them down, and then
 A voice from the Unseen reached him again:
 'Why do you reap what you yourself have sown? 3020
 You cut it down once it has fully grown.'
 'I raze it once it's finished all its growth,
 For there are grains and straw: this corn has both.
 The grain does not belong in barns, and I know
 That straw is not appropriate for the silo;
 It is unwise to mix them carelessly:
 Winnowing's therefore a necessity.'
 'From whom did you acquire this knowledge to
 Prepare a threshing floor the way you do?'
 'You gave me the discernment,' Moses said. 3025
 'So how can I, your God, lack this, instead?
 While pure souls are found in creation, there
 Are muddy souls too that are far from fair.'
 Shells are not all the same grade; it is known
 While some hold pearls, others hold just a stone.
 To manifest both good and bad's a must
 Just as with wheat and straw, as we've discussed.
 The world's creation's is so truth's revealed,
 So that our wisdom's gold won't stay concealed.
 'I was a hidden treasure'* shows it best: 3030
 Don't lose your essence, but be manifest.

Explanation that the animal soul and particular intellect and imaginings and fancies are like buttermilk while the everlasting spirit is like the butter hidden in it.

In falsehood your pure essence has been placed;
 Hidden in buttermilk is butter's taste—
 Falsehood's your body, which will rot away;
 The truth is your pure soul, which should hold sway.
 For years the body's buttermilk's revealed,
 While the soul's butter stays within, concealed,
 Until God sends a Prophet—he's the one
 Who shakes the buttermilk inside the churn,
 All so that it gets shaken properly, 3035
 So I might learn 'I was concealed from 'me',
 Or till one of His slave's communications
 Enters the ears which seek God's inspirations.
 God's speech is kept by *the believer's ear*,
 For theirs are linked to the inviter here,
 Just as the children's ears keep what their mothers
 Tell them before they learn to speak to others;
 If the child doesn't have a working ear,
 It will be mute because it cannot hear.
 The deaf have always been mute like this, brother; 3040
 The children talk if they can hear their mother.
 Deafness and dumbness are deficiencies,
 Blocking knowledge from entering in with ease.
 God speaks without being taught thus previously;
 His attributes have no deficiency.
 And one like Adam, for whom God was tutor
 Without a medium like a nurse or mother.
 And Jesus, who spoke all that God was teaching—
 As soon as he was born he started speaking,*
 To rebuff all the whispers of suspicion 3045
 That maybe he was born from fornication.
 Shaking was needed for this to set in,
 To find the butter hidden deep within—
 In buttermilk it seemed that none remained;
 Buttermilk's label claims that it's contained:

The shell appears like it exists to you;
 The root seems to decay from your own view.
 The buttermilk's not formed the butter yet—
 Don't use it till it does. Avoid regret.
 Shake it between your hands methodically 3050
 Until it shows the content you can't see.
 The Eternal's proof is in the form that dies;
 The cupbearer is known by drunkards' cries.

Another parable on this matter.

The banner's lion's playful movements show
 The ways in which the winds behind it blow:
 If those winds moving it weren't really there,
 How could drawn lions leap up in the air?
 You can detect the east wind through its motion
 From the west wind; thus it tells of what's hidden.
 The body's like the lion on the banner: 3055
 Thought moves it at each moment in some manner.
 Thought from the East is like the eastern breeze,
 Thought from the West the west wind with disease.
 Thought from the East is different to the West's,
 Though both are winds the body manifests.
 The moon's inert as is its eastern side;
 The heart's East is the soul of souls inside.
 The East of that sun which shines deep inside
 Has as its shell the sun you see outside,
 For when the body dies, it then is clear 3060
 That for it day and night will not appear,
 Yet when the inner sun is perfect, night
 And day aren't needed for it to see light.
 In dreams the sun and moon come to your vision
 Without them being seen on the horizon.
 Learn to discern, since our sleep is *death's brother*,
 The difference between one and the other.
 If some say that is just a branch of this one,
 Blind and uncertain followers, don't listen:
 In sleep the image of a state appears, 3065
 Which won't if you're awake for twenty years.

You seek interpretations endlessly,
 Rushing towards the wise ones desperately:
 ‘Tell me this dream’s true meaning!’ you appeal.
 It’s base to say it’s just derived, unreal.
 This is a plain man’s sleep while the elect ones’
 Is the root of all privilege and selections.
 Just elephants when sleep bears them away
 Will dream of India, seeing as by day;
 Donkeys won’t dream of India, since they’ve never 3070
 Felt exiled living far away from India.
 One needs an elephant-like soul that’s strong
 To go through dreams to India before long;
 Through yearning, that strong elephant remembers,
 At night its recollection then forms pictures.
 ‘Remember God!’* is not for all and sundry.
 ‘Return!’* is not meant for just anybody.
 Don’t lose hope! Be an elephant—if you
 Are not one, change to one without ado.

Behold all of the alchemists who’re found 3075
 In heaven, hear each moment their work’s sound.
 In the celestial realm they all design;
 They’re busy working for your sake and mine.
 If you don’t see such ones of the elect,
 Night-blind one, feel instead now their effect
 On your perception as you live below:
 Observe how from your own soil new plants grow.
 Ebrahim-e Adham was of their number;
 In sleep he could see spread before him India.
 He broke apart his chains and then demolished 3080
 His kingdom naturally, before he vanished.
 A sign of seeing India is that one
 Leaps up from sleep as if insane, undone,
 And buries any plans that still remain,
 And bursts apart each link of one’s own chain.
 The Prophet said of God’s light: ‘In one’s breast
 The sign of God’s light that is manifest
 Is turning from *delusion’s realm* so firmly

And also shunning joy's realm resolutely.
 O my pure friend, listen to this narration;
 It gives Mohammad's saying's explanation.

3085

Story about the prince to whom the true kingdom showed itself and then 'on the day when a man shall flee from his brother, father, and mother' became the reality of his experience: he saw the kingdom of the dust pile of the childlike, from the game of 'castle-taking', where the child that is victorious climbs the dust pile and boasts, 'The castle is mine!' The other children envy him: 'Dust is the pastime of youths.' When that prince escaped the bondage of colours, he said, 'I call these coloured earthly pieces the same as that worthless dust, not gold, satin, and brocade. I have escaped from the brocade and have attained the Oneness.' God said: 'We gave judgement when he was a youth.* God's guidance does not require seniority in age. None can have an opinion on the capacity to receive in the face of 'Be! And it is.'**

A king once had a young son who possessed
 Inside and outside virtues deemed the best.
 He dreamt that suddenly that son fell dead;
 For him pure wine became dark dregs instead.
 Due to fire's heat his water-sack eye drained;
 In that intense heat no tears soon remained.
 The king became so filled with pain entirely
 That soon sighs couldn't find a point of entry.
 His body lifeless and about to break,
 Yet there was life left when he stirred awake.
 He felt such joy on waking up once more
 Unlike what he'd experienced before.
 He nearly died of joy so unrestrained:
 Body and soul are captives that are chained;
 This lamp is snuffed out by the breath of grief
 But also from joy—it's beyond belief.
 Man lives between these two deaths like a yoke;
 This shackled-looking one is such a joke.
 The king said to himself, 'By God's decree,

3090

3095

Joy was the cause of sorrow tragically.
How wondrous that it is death from one angle,
Yet from the other nurturing and revival.
One circumstance makes it become destruction,
Another turns the same thing to protection.
In this world, bodily joy seems like perfection,
But it's a failing flaw at Resurrection.
Dream-readers say that laughter means tomorrow
Will bring regret, much weeping, and deep sorrow,
While weeping in a dream means happiness 3100
Will come, my cheerful friend, and not distress.

'This grief has passed,' the king was pondering,
'But still my soul fears such an awful thing,
And if my foot gets thorn-pricked suddenly,
Meaning the rose dies, where's my legacy?'
Death has so many causes—to pre-empt
It now, which should we block as first attempt?
A hundred doors face death's most poisonous bite;
They creak when opened, which gives such a fright. 3105
Death's door's creaks are not heard by slaves of greed;
Since their ears can't perceive, they don't take heed.
Doors creaking means pain from the body's view;
From the foe's view it means their torture too.
Read what's in books of medicine and learn
From that how all the flames of ailments burn.
Through all those ruptures there's an entry way;
A scorpion's pit is never far away.
The king said, 'My lamp's weak and wind is blowing;
I'll light another lamp until that's glowing,
So if, due to the wind, the first one dies 3110
I'll have one left still. This would be most wise.'
The mystic lights the candle of the heart,
So from the body's lamp he can depart,
And when eventually the body dies
He holds the spirit's candle near his eyes.
The king did not perceive this, and instead
He gave the dying candle to one dead.

*The king brings a bride for his son out of fear that his
bloodline will end.*

‘A bride must now be sought,’ the king deduced,
 ‘So that my offspring will be soon produced.
 So if this falcon starts to fade and wither, 3115
 His child can then become his true successor,
 For, if this falcon’s form should disappear,
 Inside his son his meaning will stay here.’
 Among the Prophet’s sayings is this one:
 ‘*The inside of his father is his son.*’
 And every loving person for this reason
 Will pass on craft and trade skills to their children,
 So that the meaning stays in this world when
 Their earthly body disappears again.
 ‘God in His wisdom has bestowed strong yearning 3120
 To guide small ones who’re capable of learning—
 I, too, for the continuance of my line,
 See for my son a wife whose traits are fine,
 The offspring of those upright and good-natured
 And not the child of kings who are bad-natured.’

The upright one’s a king, for he’s been freed,
 No longer captive to his lust and greed.
 Some have called a mere prisoner ‘the king’—
 Naming slaves ‘Kaafoor’* is a similar thing.
 The desert is a ‘safe place’, isn’t it? 3125
 Some people call the leper ‘fortunate’.*
 They called the prisoner of base desire
 ‘Prince’ or ‘most generous ruler who ranks higher’.
 They called those prisoners of destiny
 ‘Most glorious princes in this territory’.
 Beasts in the shoeing-line they call high-ranking:
 Though they have rank and wealth, their souls are lacking.
 The king chose an ascetic for his family;
 His women heard of this and took it badly.

The king chooses the daughter of a poor ascetic for his son, and the women of the harem object and feel ashamed of forming relations with the poor.

The prince's mother tried an intervention: 3130
 'Spouses should match, says reason and convention.
 You're being mean and greedy and not clever,
 Trying to join our son with a mere beggar.'
 'Calling a great man "beggar" is so wrong—
 Through God's bestowal his heart is rich and strong.
 He goes without, content through piety,
 Not, like a wretched beggar, lazily.
 Living with less through piety is blameless,
 It's not the poverty of men who're shameless:
 If they find gold scraps, they make a prostration, 3135
 While he shuns treasures through high aspiration.
 Noble ones say real beggars are those kings
 Whose greed makes them seek all forbidden things.'
 'Where are his palaces for her trousseau?
 Does he have coins and jewels that he can throw?'
 'Begone! God's taken such concerns away
 From those who suffer for the higher way.'

The king prevailed, gave the upright man's daughter
 To his own son because of how he saw her:
 Her loveliness was rivalled by no one, 3140
 Her face more radiant than the morning sun.
 Her beauty and her manners were so fine
 That words can't do them justice, friends of mine.
 If you hunt inner goals you will soon find
 Wealth, beauty, rank, and fortune trail behind.
 The next world's a wealth-bearing caravan;
 This world trails it like dung and hair, good man:
 If you choose hair, the camel's not with you—
 Select the camel, then the hair comes too.

When the king's wish for this unusual wedding 3145
 With those good ones was sealed with no rebelling,
 An old decrepit witch by destiny
 Fell in love with that fine prince suddenly.
 He grew bewitched by that decrepit gypsy
 And Babylon's famed witchcraft felt some envy:
 That young prince fell in love with that vile crone,
 Abandoning his own bride on her own.
 A gypsy of the dark arts who was ugly
 Had waylaid that young, beautiful prince suddenly.
 That ninety-year-old fetid, stinking cunt 3150
 Left him with lack of wisdom, ignorant.
 For a whole year he was infatuated;
 He'd kiss the soles of her feet as she waited.
 And that crone's company left him bereft
 Till half a soul was all that he had left.
 Due to his weakness, others suffered too.
 Magic had made him drunk; he had no clue.
 The king now felt imprisoned. That prince kept
 Laughing at all the tears his father wept.
 It was checkmate when he'd smelled victory. 3155
 Desperate, he'd give all day to charity.
 Whatever remedy the king then tried
 His son's love for the hag intensified.
 He grew sure it was God's mysterious way;
 The only cure in this case is to pray.
 'Your order shall prevail,' he prayed, prostrate.
 'Apart from You, God, who else can dictate?
 This wretch burns now like aloes—help him, please,
 Merciful, Loving One!' He didn't cease
 Until, due to his groaning and petition, 3160
 There soon appeared on the road a magician.

*The answering of the king's prayer for his son to be delivered from
 the gypsy witch.*

That man was far off, but had heard related
 That a crone left a good boy captivated,
 That in her sorcery she had no peer,

Without a rival sorcerer who'd come near.
O youth, there is one hand above another
Up to God's essence in both skill and power,
And all these hands reach God's hand finally:
The end of all the torrents is the sea.
All clouds above are formed from that, its source 3165
As well as where the torrent runs its course.

The king told him, 'He's lost control. Help, please!'
He said, 'I'm one of the best remedies.
No sorcerer is equal to that crone;
Because I'm from the Unseen, I alone,
Like Moses's hand, at the Lord's decree,
Can now destroy her horrid sorcery!
This knowledge reached me from beyond this sphere,
Not study of weak sorcery found here.
I came here to undo her witchcraft trick 3170
So that the prince of yours will not stay sick.
Go to the graveyard at the dawn's first light;
Next to the wall you'll find a tomb that's white.
Dig open that one in Mecca's direction,
To see the power of God's work there in action.'

This story's very long and you are weary;
I'll boil it down to what is necessary.*
He opened up those tight knots which delivered
The prince from the ordeal that he had suffered.
The youth came to himself and ran away 3175
To the king's throne despite trials on the way.
He then fell down prostrate before his father;
With sword and his own shroud he made the offer.
The king decreed the town be decorated,
Then all, his bride included, celebrated.
The world revived and seemed so radiant—
In just one day things were so different.
The king held such a lavish wedding there
That dogs were fed rose candy with no care.

The old witch died of grief and to the Maker 3180
 She gave back her vile face and ugly nature.
 The prince then asked himself in sheer amazement:
 'How did she rob my reason, sight, and judgement?'
 He saw his bride moon-like in radiant beauty,
 Surpassing all the others who were pretty—
 He lost his wits and fell for her then fully,
 His heart for three days vanished from his body.
 He stayed unconscious for this time, throughout;
 There was commotion at his passing out.
 Through rose water and treatments, little by little 3185
 He came around and could tell good from evil.
 The king spoke to him after one year passed:
 'O son, remember your friend from the past:
 That old bedfellow on that bed, so then
 You won't be so disloyally harsh again.'
 'No way, I've found the realm of purest rapture
 And fled the pit of that realm of bad error.'
 It's like that when believers find the way:
 To God's light from the dark they turn away.

Explaining that the prince is Man, God's deputy's son, his father is Adam, God's deputy to whom the angels prostrated, and that old gypsy is the world who separated father and son through sorcery, and the Prophets and Friends of God are the physician who fixed the situation.

O brother, you should know the prince is you— 3190
 Into this world you can be born anew.
 The gypsy witch is this world which has meant
 Men falling captive to its hues and scent.
 Since she has flung you in pollution there,
 Make 'Say: "I now take refuge!"'* now your prayer.
 To flee this witchcraft and not feel forlorn,
 Seek refuge with *The Lord of Every Damn*.*
 The Prophet called this world a witch as well,
 Since men fall in the pit due to its spell.
 That putrid hag's spells have such powers, beware! 3195
 They've even turned kings into captives there.

She's of *the blowing witches** inside you;
 She tightens witchcraft's knots inside you too.
 The sorceress world is wily, and it's tragic
 The masses cannot cope with her black magic.
 If men's brains could untie her knots, why then
 Should God have sent the Prophets down to men?
 Seek the sweet-breathed knot-loosener who is privy
 To '*God does what He should will*'* and its mystery.
 She trapped you in her net like fish so simply: 3200
 That prince stayed for a year; you'd stay for sixty!
 You'll stay in her net for that long duration,
 Not happy, not pursuing good tradition.
 A wretched scoundrel, your world's neither good
 Nor rescued from sins. You've not understood.
 Her breathing's tightened these knots, so now seek
 The breathing of the Maker, who's unique.
 '*I breathed in him My spirit*'* saves you from
 This fate and says: 'Ascend now higher. Come!'
 Just God's breath can consume breath of the sorcerer; 3205
 The latter's wrath, while love's breath is the former.
 His mercy's prior to His wrath,* so you
 Should seek what's prior to be prior too,
 So you may reach *the wedded souls** one day,
 For, smitten prince, this is your route away.
 There's no knot-loosening with that hag in place,
 With you still in that flirt's net and embrace.
 Hasn't Mohammad said, 'This world and that one
 Are like *two fellow wives* as a comparison?
 You cannot simultaneously unite 3210
 With both: the body's health means spirit's plight.

Is parting hard from this realm that is transient?
 Think how hard it is from the realm that's permanent.
 To leave the form is hard for you, so ponder
 How severance from the Lord is that much harder.
 Parting this world's too hard for you today—
 How will you cope when God is far away?
 You miss so much the water that is black—

How much you'll miss clear fountains that you lack.
 If you're without this world's drink you can't rest, 3215
 How then without *the ones who drink*,* the blessed.
 If you could see His beauty for one instant
 You'd fling your soul and being in flames, insistent.
 Afterwards you will see this world as carrion,
 Once you have seen the glory of His union.
 You'll reach your loved one like the prince, then you
 Will take the thorn of self from your foot too.
 Strive now for selflessness with all your might;
 Be faster, for *the Lord knows best what's right*.
 Do not stay wedded with yourself perpetually. 3220
 Don't always fall in dirt just like a donkey.
 Short-sightedness makes people stumble here.
 Like blind men they can't see the slopes appear.
 On Joseph's shirt's scent you should now rely,*
 Because its scent gives vision to the eye.
 The hidden form and radiance from that forehead
 Have made the eyes of Prophets be far-sighted.
 That face's light will save you from the fire.
 Don't be content with borrowed light—aim higher.
 The borrowed light makes eyes see what is temporary, 3225
 And it makes body, mind, and spirit scabby.
 It's really fire, though it's light in appearance.
 Keep your hands off it if you want real radiance.
 The eyes and soul that only see what's transient
 Fall everywhere flat on their face each instant.
 Far-sighted men may see more than a scholar
 Just as in dreams unschooled men may see further.
 You sleep with parched lips now beside a river,
 Yet run to a mirage to find some water;
 You notice a mirage and start to chase— 3230
 You fall in love with your own sight, disgrace!
 While dreaming you boast vainly to a friend:
 'With my heart's vision all veils I can rend.
 Look, I've seen water over there. Let's go!'
 But that's just a mirage and you don't know.
 The further that unreal mirage lures you,
 The further from the water you'll reach too.

Your own resolve veils you from what's right here:
 Water that you can drink extremely near.
 Many resolve to make a distant journey 3235
 From that place where their goal is found already.
 The sleeper's boast and vision are both nonsense;
 It's just a fantasy, so keep your distance.
 You're sleepy, but sleep as you travel there
 While on the path to God, not anywhere,
 In case a mystic on the path meets you
 And frees you from vain dreams as he can do.
 Though thoughts in sleep be finer than a hair,
 The sleeper won't discover the way there,
 And even if that thought is multilayered 3240
 It's error upon error that's been layered.
 Sea waves keep striking him without relenting,
 And yet he dreams he's thirsty and keeps panting,
 As though he's in a desert with no water—
 In fact real water's *closer than his jugular!**

Story about that ascetic who was happy and laughing in a year of drought, despite being penniless with a large family, while people were dying of hunger. They said to him, 'What a time to rejoice! This is the time for a hundred laments.' He responded, 'For me it isn't a burden.'

It's like that strange ascetic who would smile
 In drought when other men wept all the while.
 They asked, 'What are you smiling now about?
 Good people have been ruined by this drought.
 God's mercy's closed its eyes to us; the sun 3245
 Is so strong that our meadows all now burn.
 Orchards, vineyards, and farms have all turned black.
 No moisture in the soil, a total lack.
 People are dying due to drought and torture
 Now by the hundreds like fish out of water.
 Don't you feel for your own community,
 One body with deep family unity?
 And if a single body part should suffer
 In peace and war that pain is shared together.'

'To your eyes this is a harsh drought,' he said, 3250
 'To mine this land's like paradise instead:
 I see in every place I look upon,
 Reaching up to my waist, abundant corn.
 Wind blows those ears—by me it's clearly seen—
 This fills the desert and makes it so green.
 To test, I reach and touch them—how can I
 Withdraw from all of this my hand and eye?'

Base people, you're the Pharaoh-body's friend—
 That's why you see the waves as blood. Ascend!
 Be Moses of true wisdom's friend. Move faster 3255
 For blood to leave so you can see the water.*
 Fall badly out with your own father and
 He'll seem to you a cur, but understand
 He's not a cur—That's due to your rebellion:
 That mercy seems a cur to your warped vision.
 His brothers saw as wolf-like due to envy
 Sweet Joseph, for they had become so angry.*
 Make peace now with your father! Rage will end
 And he won't seem a cur, but your best friend.

*Explaining that the whole world is the form of the Universal
 Intellect. If you treat Universal Intellect unjustly by your
 corrupt action, the form of the world increases your grief in
 most situations, just as when you have fallen out with your
 father—his form increases your grief and you can't look at
 his face even though before he would have been the light of
 your eye and the comfort of your soul.*

The world's the Universal Intellect's form, father 3260
 To human beings who heed God's 'Say!/* as follower.
 When someone shows ingratitude to it,
 All forms look at him just like curs to hit.
 Make peace now with the father, end rebellion,
 So this world seems a gold rug to your vision.
 The Resurrection will be felt by you;

Heaven and earth will both transform then, too.
 Since I'm at peace with him, to my own eyes
 The world appears a wondrous paradise.
 A new form and new beauty will appear 3265
 Each moment; weariness will disappear.
 I see the world as something full of bounty,
 With springs that keep on gushing water strongly;
 Their waters' noises reach my ear—I find
 Myself a drunk and lose my wits and mind:
 Like worshippers the branches are all dancing;
 Like minstrels all the leaves on them are clapping.
 A flash now shines from inside its felt cover—
 Imagine then when you see the full mirror!
 It's not one-thousandth of it I've set out: 3270
 It's less, but all these ears are stuffed with doubt.
 To their imaginings it shows future days,
 But 'Here's my cash in hand now,' reason says.

*The story about the sons of Ozayr who were asking after
 their father from their father himself without knowing. He
 answered, 'Yes, I've seen him. He is coming.' Some
 recognized him and became unconscious. Others didn't and
 said, 'He only gave news about the future, so why fall
 unconscious?'*

It's like the case of the sons of Ozayr
 Who'd ask for news about him everywhere.
 While he was made young they had all grown old;
 Their father came once, as it has been told:
 Not recognizing him, they asked him, 'Traveller,
 Do you have news about Ozayr, our father,
 For just today we all were finally told 3275
 Despair has gone; he'll come back to the fold?'
 He said, 'Yes, he's behind me on the way.'
 A son rejoiced at what he heard him say:
 'May this kind bearer of good news feel joyous!'
 Another recognized him, fell unconscious,
 Saying: 'It's not the time for forecasts, brother,
 For we have fallen in a mine of sugar.'

The wise experience; forecasts aren't direct:
 The forecast's eye is veiled by a defect.
 It's pain to infidels, while to believers 3280
 It's good news. But experience can sate seers:
 Since lovers get drunk when they taste directly,
 Beyond both faith and unbelief, they're lofty.
 The latter pair are doorkeepers, outside
 Like shells that hold the kernels deep inside;
 The dried shell's unbelief; it looks away.
 The inner skin's faith—some taste spreads its way.
 Dry shells belong in hell, while skins that meet
 With kernels held within will all turn sweet.
 Kernels transcend this sweetness nonetheless; 3285
 They grant this sweetness from their own largesse.
 This talk could go on till infinity—
 Return, so Moses can transform the sea.
 This discourse so far suits the average brains;
 Concealed things follow in what now remains.
 Your intellect's gold is like grains and filings—
 How can I mint a coin with those small triflings.
 Dealing with crucial things divides your brain,
 Numerous desires and matters strange or plain—
 Love joins the separate bits with its own hand 3290
 So you'll become as fine as Samarqand.
 Once, grain by grain, you have become united,
 The King's coin can through you be freshly minted.
 And if you're larger than a coin's size too,
 The King will make a golden cup from you,
 With His name, royal title, and his face,
 Seeker of union, all etched in their place.
 So your Beloved can be bread and water,
 Lamp, witness, wine, and almonds wrapped in sugar,
 Make yourself one! Union's a merciful grace. 3295
 I'll tell you what is real then to your face,
 For speaking's aim is that it be accepted;
 Polytheism's soul heard, but rejected.
 The soul is scattered by things in the heavens
 And shared among some sixty different passions—
 Silence is therefore best, for it gives permanence:

The answer to the stupid wretch is silence.
 I know this; bodily drunkenness though still
 Opens again my mouth against my will,
 Just as in sneezing and in yawning too, 3300
 Your mouth will open, though not willed by you.

*Commentary on the Prophet's saying: 'I ask God for forgiveness
 seventy times every day.'*

Like our dear Prophet, I repent each day
 Seventy times for things I loosely say,
 But drunkenness breaks my repentance vow,
 Makes me forget and rend clothes anyhow.
 The wisdom of revealing all past history
 Gave drunkenness to knowers of the mystery.
 With drum and banner, hidden mysteries
 Have gushed out from '*the pen's dry*',* which decrees.
 The Boundless Mercy's in a constant flow, 3305
 But you who are asleep still cannot know.
 Sleepers' clothes draw in water from the streams
 While they seek a mirage out in their dreams,
 Saying: 'There's sign of water miles away.'
 Their thinking blocks themselves from the right way.
 The sleepers said, 'Away', from fantasy,
 So they divorced thus from reality;
 Their souls sleep while they search so far away—
 Feel sorry for those travellers today!
 I've not seen true thirst cause sleep, no, not once; 3310
 Sleep comes from thirst in those with ignorance.
 True wisdom's that which God Himself has fed,
 Not that which Mercury has brought instead.*

*Explaining that the particular intellect does not see beyond the grave.
 Regarding such things it is dependent on the Prophets and Friends of God.*

This knowledge sees up to the grave, not past;
 The mystic sees till Resurrection's blast.
 This knowledge doesn't pass graves any further;
 The foot does not step in the realm of wonder—
 Leave both this foot and intellect behind.

Seek eyes for the Unseen. Much gain you'll find.
 How can one who needs teachers, books they write, 3315
 Shine from his breast, like Moses, purest light.*
 Opinion's knowledge gives just vertigo—
 Instead choose waiting for what He'll bestow.
 Do not expect to rise up through your speaking;
 Superior to your speaking is your hearing.
 Teaching posts are craved after by fierce rivals;
 Mere thoughts of cravings on this path are idols.
 If every fool could find paths to His grace.
 Why did God send the Prophets to this place?
 Particular intellect's a lightning flash— 3320
 In just one evening how can one reach Vakhsh?*
 Lightning's light's not to lead us just like sheep
 But a command to clouds that they must weep.
 Our intellect is meant for tears: for instance
 When non-existence weeps to gain existence.
 The child's brain tells him, 'Go to school!' But it
 Can't on its own learn; clearly it's unfit.
 The sick one's intellect leads to a healer,
 But it can't on its own cure sickness either.
 Devils went to the heavens once to spy, 3325
 Listening to secrets that were shared on high:
 They first stole a few little scraps away,
 But then the shooting stars drove them away:
 'Begone! A Prophet's gone to earth to speak;
 You can acquire from him the things you seek.
 If you seek priceless pearls, the scripture states:
 "*Enter their houses through their proper gates!*"*
 Knock and stay waiting at the door, for there
 Is no way for you to alone soar there.
 The long route to here wasn't necessary; 3330
 We've shown to humans every mystery.
 If you're not heedless, go to him! Take heed.
 Be sugar cane soon, though now a plain reed.'

The guide will make grass grow on dust as proof;
 He isn't less than Gabriel's horse's hoof.*

You too will soon be fresh and green, of course,
 If you become the dust of Gabriel's horse.
 That verdure that gives life which Sameri
 Put in the calf to have efficacy,*
 That verdure gave it life, so it then roared 3335
 In such a way that its foe then was floored.
 Come to the secret's knowers truthfully
 And, like the hooded falcon, you'll break free—
 The hood blocks ears from hearing, eyes from vision,
 And it has made downtrodden that poor falcon.
 It blinds that falcon's eyes since they're inclined
 Always towards the birds of their own kind—
 It joins the king once severed from its own;
 The falconer opens its eyes then alone.
 God drove the devils far from His watchtower 3340
 And the particular intellect from power,
 Saying, 'Don't domineer; you aren't a ruler,
 But the heart's pupil—that is what you're good for.'
 Go to the heart—you're part of that heart's whole,
 A servant of the Just King is your role.
 Being His slave's better than being a sultan,
 For '*I am better*' were the words of Satan.*
 Choose, captive, once you've seen the difference,
 Adam's slavehood not Satan's arrogance.
 'May he whose carnal soul has been undone 3345
 Be blessed!' said His path's special mystic sun.
 Go to the Tuba tree's shade and sleep well;
 Rest your head in that shade and don't rebel.
 The shade of one whose self has been effaced
 Is where those seeking pureness will be graded.
 If you leave this shade for your selfishness,
 You'll lose the path through sheer rebelliousness.

Explaining the Qur'anic verse: 'You who believe, don't put yourself before God and His messenger. Since you are not a prophet, be a member of his community; since you are not a sultan, be a subject; be silent and don't bring arrogance and opinion from yourself!'*

So go, be silent in sincere surrender,

In the shade of commands made by the mentor,
 Or, though you're able and have the potential, 3350
 Boasting perfection will become your downfall.
 You'll even lose potential for the future
 If you rebel against the mystic tutor:
 Be patient, cobbler, with your own position,
 Or you'll be a rag-mender through demotion.
 The rag-mender through patience and forbearance
 Learns to become a tailor soon, for instance —
 So strive on, and from weariness declare:
 'The intellect's a fetter.' Let's compare
 With the philosophers who at the Hour 3355
 Saw their intelligence did not have power,
 Admitting, though they didn't want to ever,
 'We rode our horse in vain through being clever,
 Rebelling then against the true men, we
 Swam in a sea that was imaginary.'
 To swim inside the spiritual sea's delusion;
 Other than Noah's ark there's no solution.
 Mohammad, King of Prophets shared this notion:
 'I'm the ship in the Universal Ocean,
 Or one who is a visionary like me, 3360
 Becoming my successor spiritually.'
 We're Noah's ark in seas now—that's the truth.
 Don't turn your face away from this ark, youth.
 Don't head, like Canaan, to each soaring mountain:
 'Today there's no protection'*—you should listen.
 With blinkers on, the ark looks low; it's not.
 You view as high the mountain of mere thought.
 Don't deem low what is really lowliness;
 It's linked to grace sent from His Holiness.
 Don't be impressed the mountain of thought's tall 3365
 When just one wave can make that mountain fall.
 If you're like Canaan, you will not believe me,
 Though you hear hundreds of such counsels from me.
 Canaan's ears won't accept these words I share
 When God has put on them His seals to wear:
 Sermons can't pass through God's seals, so how can
 A transient thing change what's ordained, good man?

But I am telling news about good fortune,
 All in the hope that you are not a Canaan,
 So in the end you can sincerely say 3370
 That from the first you see the final day:
 You now can see the end. Do not make blind
 Your eyes which see the end from far behind.
 One who is blessed to be a visionary
 Won't trip up on this true itinerary.
 If you don't want your stumbling to repeat,
 Give your eyes vision from the mystic's feet.
 Make his feet's dust kohl for your eyes instead,
 So you can strike at every hoodlum's head.
 Through being a student who is spiritually needy, 3375
 From needle-thin you'll be the sword of Ali.
 So make your kohl from dust of those who're pure
 And, though at first it burns eyes, it will cure.
 The camel's pair of eyes is very good
 Because for their sake it seeks thorns for food.

*Story about the mule's complaint to the camel: 'I fall on my face
 often while moving, but you don't—why is that?' The camel
 answers it.*

One day a mule saw that he had retired
 Next to a camel, so he then enquired:
 'I fall so frequently flat on my face
 On the hills, roads, and in the marketplace,
 But from the mountain top especially— 3380
 I topple down head-first there dangerously.
 But you don't fall on your face—why is it?
 Perhaps your pure soul is more fortunate?
 I fall down on my head and bang my knees;
 Like my soft snout they start to bleed with ease—
 My load and saddle then fall on my head
 And riders on me strike although I've bled.'

It's like those who have weak intelligence,
 Who break their vows with further sins at once—

Satan mocks joyfully all weak-willed men 3385
 Who break their vows so quickly once again.
 Like a lame horse that often falls on roads
 Because they're rocky and it bears huge loads,
 For breaking vows that man's deprived of luck
 And then from the Unseen he's often struck.
 With weak resolve he makes the same vow, then
 The Devil spits once and he falls again.
 Although extremely weak, he shows disdain
 Through arrogance to seekers who attain.

The mule said, 'Camel, you are one of those 3390
 Believers who don't fall or raise their nose.
 What do you have that you don't fall like me
 Or stumble and fall face-down constantly?'
 'We both rely on God, but differences
 Are clear, O mule, between the two of us:
 I have a high head and my eyes are lofty;
 Such vision gives security from injury:
 From every mountain top, if I should look
 I see each plain and hollow, every nook,
 Just as those glorious rulers saw ahead 3395
 All their affairs until when they'd be dead.'
 To someone of good essence now appears
 The things that will occur in twenty years,
 And, in addition to his own fate, he
 Sees East and West, all people's destiny.
 The light makes its home in his heart and eye
 Due to love of its homeland: that is why.
 He is like Joseph, who dreamed that the sun
 And moon bowed down to him in unison.
 What Joseph saw, once more than ten years passed, 3400
 Raised up its head and was fulfilled at last.*
 The Prophet said, '*By God's light he can view*';
 God's light can split the sky above in two.
 Begone, for in your eyes this light's not found;
 By bestial senses you remain still bound.

'You see just what's in front,' the camel said,
 'Due to weak eyes; your guide is weak instead:
 The eye serves as the guide to legs and hands;
 For where to go or run from in these lands.
 Another factor is my eyes are clearer 3405
 And also my creation is much cleaner:
 I'm a legitimate child anyway,
 Not born of fornication and astray.
 No doubt, you're one of those, as men relate:
 "When the bow's bent, the arrow can't fly straight." '

The mule confirmed the truth of the camel's answer and admitted the camel's superiority over himself. Then he asked for the camel's help and sincerely took refuge in him. The camel was kind to him and showed the way with his support in a fatherly and regal fashion.

The mule said, 'Camel, all your words are true.'
 And after this its eyes grew tearful too.
 The mule wept at the camel's feet, subservient,
 Said, 'Chosen by *the Lord of every servant*,
 Through blessedness perhaps you can afford 3410
 To now accept me as your slave, my lord?'
 The camel said, 'Since now in front of me
 You have confessed, you're free from transiency.
 You're spared grief, since you were fair in the end.
 You were a foe, but soar now as God's friend.
 It wasn't in your essence in the end
 For a bad essence gives denial, friend;
 That only was a surface-grafted badness—
 It makes confession and seeks out forgiveness,
 Like Adam's, for his slip was temporary 3415
 And he repented for it urgently.
 Since Satan's sin instead was from his essence,
 He couldn't find the way towards repentance.
 You've been released from self and your bad flaws,
 The tongues of flames and the wild beasts' huge jaws.
 You've now grasped fortune, so continue passing;
 You've dived in fortune that is everlasting.
 "Enter among my servants" is your own;

“Enter my garden”* also you have sewn.
 You’ve made a path to join his servants too, 3420
 And by that hidden way you’ve entered through.
 “Guide us to the straight path!”* you have read out;
 He led you to that bliss which you sought out.
 My dear, from fire you’ve turned to light—once sour,
 You’ve changed to grapes and raisins through His power.
 Once a mere star, you now shine much more light—
 O sun, be happy! *God knows best what’s right.*’

O Light of God, Hosam, please come and pour
 Into this milk some honey from your store,
 So that milk’s savour won’t change needlessly, 3425
 But rather gain from savour’s boundless sea.
 When it unites with the sea of Alast,*
 Becoming ocean, free from change at last,
 Inside that honey ocean it will find
 An entry, safe from harm of any kind.
 Lion of God, give out a lion-like roar
 To reach the seventh heaven to which we soar.
 What does the weary soul know of our soaring?
 What does the mouse know of the lion’s roaring?
 Write all about your mystic states with gold 3430
 For ocean-hearted ones wish to be told.
 This soul-expanding talk is the Nile’s water—
 Make it blood to Egyptians, Lord, Transformer!

*The Egyptian begs the Israelite: fill a jug from the Nile intending it
 for yourself, then place it to my lips through the right of friendship
 and brotherhood, for the jug which you Israelites fill from the Nile
 for yourselves is pure water and that which we Egyptians fill is
 pure blood.*

I heard that an Egyptian went inside
 A Jew’s house, since from thirst he’d nearly died,
 To beg, ‘I am your friend and kinsman, too.
 Today I need a helping hand from you.
 Since Moses used his spells and awful magic

To turn the Nile to blood, our fate's been tragic.
You Jews can drink pure water from it, while 3435
Closed-eyed Egyptians find blood fills the Nile—
See dying now from thirst Egyptian people,
Due to ill fortune or traits that are evil.
Fill for yourself a cup of water now,
So this old friend can drink from yours somehow.
When you fill for yourself that cup, I'm sure
It won't be blood but water that is pure.
I'll drink the water in your situation.
Parasites flee pain through such imitation.'

'O precious, dear friend, I'll come to your aid; 3440
I'll handle it,' his Jewish friend then said,
'I'll carry out what you wish happily;
I'll be your slave in bondage, then act free.'
He filled the cup then from the Nile, put it
To his own lips and drank down half of it,
Then passed it to his friend: 'You drink some too!'
But it became dark blood then in full view.
It changed to water when he pulled the cup
Back to his own lips, so his friend blew up,
Enraged, then sat awhile once he'd calmed down: 3445
'Brother, whose firm resolve has earned renown,
What can untie this knot that's shackling me?'
'It's only drunk by men with piety:
The pious one is he who's shunned the way
Of Pharaoh, and is Moses-like today.
Join Moses's men, then drink all this soon.
Make peace with and behold light from the moon.
You've so much drunkenness your eyes can't see,
Due to your rage at every devotee
Of God—put out rage, open eyes, and learn 3450
From friends, then you can teach when it's your turn.'

You can't drink with me water you so prize
When your vile unbelief has Mount Qaf's size.

How can a mountain fit a needle's eye
 Unless it turns to one thread? You must try
 To make it straw by begging for forgiveness,
 Then from cups for forgiven ones drink in bliss.
 It has been banned for faithless men by God,
 So how can you succeed to drink through fraud?
 God made all fraud—He won't be fooled, O fraudster, 3455
 By lies that you make up and your imposture.
 Become a follower of Moses now.
 Tricks will fail trying to catch the wind somehow.
 Does water have the gall to disobey
 God's order and quench infidels today?
 Do you think you can drink from your own bowl
 When it's snake poison and destroys your soul?
 How can food make the soul start feeling stronger
 When it has turned your heart against God's order?
 Do you think when you read this *Masnawi* 3460
 That you can listen to it now for free,
 That words of wisdom and deep mysteries
 Reach everybody's mouth and ears with ease?
 It's just a tale in that scenario;
 The shell and not the kernel's what will show,
 Like sweethearts who veil that face you adore
 From your eyes as they put on a chador.*
 You see as the same thing, you wicked man,
Kalila and Dimna and the Qur'an.
 Falsehood and truth are different as can be. 3465
 When your eyes open through God's grace you'll see.
 Otherwise musk and dung are one as well
 To someone whose nose can no longer smell.
 His aim's to save himself from weariness
 By reading out the words of God, no less,
 Hoping those words will cure him and snuff out
 The fire inside of suffering and doubt.
 To put out this much fire you easily could
 Use dirty urine, for it's just as good:
 Urine and water both put out doubt's fire, 3470
 The way they do in sleep when you retire.
 But if you get to know pure water, which

Is God's speech and is spiritually rich,
 Doubts in your soul will all be cleared away
 And then your heart takes the rose garden's way,
 For he who breathes a whiff of God's great book
 Soars in an orchard with a pleasant brook.
 Or do you think that in reality
 Faces of God's Friends' are like what we see?

The Prophet marvelled at this and asked, 'Why 3475
 Is my face not seen by the faithful eye?
 Why can't the people see my face's light
 Which has surpassed the sun's since it's so bright?
 And, if they do see, why is there confusion
 Till revelation states: "That face is hidden."'
 A moon to you, but people see a cloud.
 For infidels free viewing's not allowed.
 To you it's bait, to them traps that confine,
 So vulgar men can't drink exclusive wine.
 God said, '*They're looking*' to you, didn't He? 3480
 Yet, like the bathhouse paintings, *they can't see*:*
 It's just a form, though it may now appear
 As if its lifeless eyes see what is here,
 Form worshipper—you show before its eyes
 Respect and say: 'What sadness and surprise
 That this nice painting won't respond at all
 Though "Peace be unto you!" I loudly call.
 With head and moustache it won't indicate
 Approval for the times that I prostrate.'
 Though God does not nod outwardly His head, 3485
 His answer's favour's felt inside instead,
 And that's worth hundreds of such nods—do soul
 And mind in answer ever nod at all?
 If you should strive in serving intellect
 It gives more guidance, earned by your respect.
 God doesn't outwardly nod at you either
 But He makes you among the chiefs their leader.
 He gives you something very secret too
 That makes all people here prostrate to you,

The way He gave such virtue to mere stone 3490
 That it became loved and as 'gold' is known;
 A drop of water gains God's kindest grace,
 Becomes a pearl and then takes up gold's place.
 The body's dust—when God gave it His light
 It grew just like the moon with conquering might.
 This world is a dead sketch and talisman;
 Its eye lures off the path the stupid man;
 It looks as if it's winking when it's seen;
 Fools choose it as the prop on which they lean.

The Egyptian requests a prayer for blessing and guidance from the Israelite. The Israelite prays for blessing for the Egyptian and receives a reply from the Most Generous and Merciful God.

Next the Egyptian asked, 'Pray for my heart— 3495
 Its darkness means my mouth is kept apart—
 Then maybe my heart's lock will be released
 And this vile one join beauties at their feast.'
 You can make the deformed turn beautiful,
 Turn Satan back to being celestial,
 Or give a dry branch freshness and musk's scent
 And fruit through Mary's power that's heaven-sent.*
 The Israelite fell right then in prostration:
 'O God who knows both manifest and hidden,
 Who else should any servant now pray to? 3500
 Both answer and petition come from you.
 You also gave desire to pray initially,
 As You give the response as well eventually.
 You are the First and Last, while we are nothing
 Here in the middle and now not worth mentioning.'
 He said such things till his mind grew delirious
 And his heart then completely fell unconscious,
 Then, while in prayer, he came back to again—
*Other than what they strive for, naught for men.**
 A scream and roar came while he was still praying 3505
 From that Egyptian's heart, and it was saying:
 'Hurry, accept this faith, no longer dawdle,
 So I can quickly cut my old faith's girdle.

A fire's been cast into my soul, you see—
 They've treated well one Satan-like as me.
 Thank God, your friendship finally led the way
 Because I now can't bear to be away.
 Time spent with you was alchemy—may your
 Feet never step outside my heart's front door!
 You use a branch from paradise's tree— 3510
 I grasped and was borne there amazingly.
 Swept from my body by a flood, this motion
 Carried me to His Kindness's huge ocean.
 I headed for the flood so I could drink,
 But gained pearls when I reached the ocean's brink.'

The Israelite brought his cup: 'Drink!' he said.
 'Begone! Water is loathsome now instead—
 I've drunk a draught from "*God has bought*",* my friend,
 So I'll not thirst again until the end.
 He who gave water to the stream and fountain 3515
 Has sent to me a fountain like an ocean.
 My heart was fond of water in the past,
 But my desire for water now comes last.
 For His slaves He becomes *kaf* simply to
 Make *kaf ha ya aym sad*'s big promise true.*
 "I give you every good thing," God told me,
 "Without cause or an intermediary.
 I'm All-Sufficing. I feed with no bread.
 Without an army, I make you the head.
 Without spring I give flowers, if you look. 3520
 I teach without a teacher or a book.
 I cure you without medicine—My grace
 Can make the pit and grave an open space.
 I give to Moses with one rod a heart,
 So with swords he can slash a world apart.
 I give to Moses's hand light with brightness
 That can outshine the sun yet show it kindness.
 I make mere wood a seven-headed serpent,
 A kind not seen being born from one that's pregnant.
 I don't let blood mix with Nile's water, rather 3525

I make blood water's essence, for I'm clever.
 Like the Nile's waves I turn your joy to sorrow,
 Such that you can't find joy again tomorrow.
 When you want to renew your faith again
 But next to Pharaoh you feel helpless, then
 You'll see come Mercy's Moses from before
 And the Nile's blood turn back to waves once more.
 If you keep safe the end of your faith's thread,
 Your savour's Nile won't change to blood instead."
 I thought I would change faiths in place of blood 3530
 To drink some water from this awful flood—
 How could I then have known that all the while
 He'd change my nature and make me a Nile?'

I am a flowing Nile to my own eye,
 Though I look motionless to passers-by,
 And to the Prophet this world is continuous
 In praising God yet to us it looks heedless:
 To him this world is full of love and justice;
 To ordinary men it's dead and lifeless.
 He sees the hills and valleys moving round; 3535
 He hears wise words from bricks and from the ground:
 They are all dead and limited to most;
 I've never seen a stranger veil exposed.
 To our eyes graves are all alike as well—
 God's friends see gardens next to pits of hell.
 Vulgar men say, 'Why has the Prophet now
 Become a killjoy and so sour somehow?'
 Elite men say, 'He only looks so sour,
 O people, since your sight is lacking power—
 For once, come into our eyes for a while 3540
 To see "*Has there once come?*"* raise a huge smile.
 For on the pear tree there it will appear
 Topsy-turvy, young man, so come down here.
 That pear tree is existence's tree, so
 While up there new things look so old below:
 Once up there you'll see bushes full of thorns
 And lots of snakes and angry scorpions.

You'll see for free when back on solid ground
A world with rose-cheeked beauties all around.

Story about that filthy-acting woman who said to her husband: 'Those illusions appear to you from the top of the pear tree, for it shows such things to the human eye. Come down from the top of the pear tree so those illusions go away.'

And if anyone says that what that man saw was not an illusion, the answer is that it is a parable not an analogy. For a parable this amount is enough, for if he had not gone to the top of the pear tree he would never have seen those things, whether real or imaginary.

A woman sought her lover's warm embrace
Before her cuckold husband's foolish face. 3545

She told her husband, 'Lucky man, I'll be
In search of fruit to pick upon that tree.'
Once she'd climbed up, she wept and kept her stare
Fixed on her husband from her perch up there,
Screaming: 'Are you a male whore? Tell me who
Is that vile queer who has just mounted you?
Beneath you're like a woman who is swooning.

Have you been always queer? What are you doing?'
Her husband said, 'Your head's afflicted! No, 3550
There's no one else in this whole field below.'

The woman asked, 'Hiding beneath that hat,
Who is that stretched on top of you like that?'
'Wife, come down from the tree!' her husband said,
'You're acting senile and you've lost your head.'

Once she came down, her husband went up there.
She grabbed her lover in the open air
For an embrace. Her husband shouted, 'Who
Is that ape-like man, whore, who's mounting you?'
'There's no one else down here near to my presence. 3555
Your head has been afflicted. Don't talk nonsense!
He then repeated to her what he'd said.

She claimed, 'It must be that pear tree instead—
While I was perched on it, I similarly

Saw such things, cuckold, so mistakenly.
 Come down to see that there is nothing here.
 That pear tree makes illusions all appear.'

Joking is teaching, so pay close attention—

Don't look at just the joke's form of expression.

To jesters every serious thing's hilarious,

3560

But to the wise hilarious jokes are serious.

Lazy men seek the pear tree that is near;

The other pear tree's a long way from here.

Get off the pear tree that has made you dizzy

And left your vision spinning fast and giddy.

The tree here's self-existence's big 'I,'

So it distorts the vision of each eye.

Descend the pear tree, then your speech and sight

Your thought, too, will flee its distortion's plight.

You'll see this has become a tree of fortune,

3565

With its branch reaching to the seventh heaven.

Once you descend and thus abandon it,

God, through His mercy, starts transforming it—

You've come down with humility, and so

True vision is what God will now bestow.

(If vision were so easy to acquire,

Why did the blest Mohammad once desire

This gift from God: 'Show me how parts appear

To You, all parts found high and low down here'?)

Then afterwards return to that pear tree

3570

Now it's been changed, made verdant by his '*Be!*'*

You've moved your load to Moses with this push,

So that tree's similar to his burning bush.

The fire makes it become so green and lovely;

Each of its branches says, '*I am God!*' loudly.

In its shade all your needs are met for free;

This is the working of God's alchemy.

Your self and being are now permissible,

Since there God's attributes are visible.

That crooked tree's now straight and not awry;

3575

It's God-revealing, *roots firm, branch to sky.**

The remainder of the story about Moses.

Through revelation a new message said:
 'Abandon crookedness, *be straight** instead!
 The body's Moses's rod—the command
 Came down to him: 'Throw it down from your hand,
 To see its merit and its mystery,
 Then pick it up again by His decree.'
 Before being thrown it was mere wood, and when
 He picked it up it was mere wood again.
 For lambs' sakes it shook down leaves previously, 3580
 Then it made helpless those who wouldn't see.
 Now ruler over Pharaoh's men instead,
 It made their water blood and beat each head.
 Famine and death were all their fields produced,
 Due to the locusts that were introduced,
 Till Moses selflessly was moved to prayer
 Once he had seen the end of their affair:
 'Why all this strife? Why make them impotent?
 These men will not want their own betterment.'
 'Follow Noah!' was the Great Lord's reply, 3585
 'Don't look just at the ends shown to your eye.
 Ignore that! You're a summoner to the way.
*Deliver!** This is not in vain. Obey!
 The least good in this is that your persistence
 Will show their stubborn evil and resistance;
 God's guidance and His leading some astray
 Will be made clear to all the sects this way.
 Existence's aim's that it's manifested;
 By guidance and misleading, it gets tested.'
 The Devil keeps misleading you and hiding; 3590
 The master of the path persists in guiding.
 When that command for harsh ends went ahead
 The Nile turned into blood, from blue to red.
 The Pharaoh came himself, appearing humble,
 Pleading to Moses while he was bent double:
 'Don't do what we did, sultan! Not the same.
 We won't give an excuse. We've too much shame.

With every fibre I'll accept your order.

Don't be too hard on me; I'm used to honour.

Move your lips, trusted one, now in your mercy,

So they will shut my mouth which was so fiery.'

3595

Moses said, 'Lord, he is deceiving me,

Though I am Your deceiver actually.

Shall I heed him or give deception too,

So that branch-puller learns the root's with you?

The root of each deception after all

Is here: all things' roots are celestial.'

God said, 'That cur's not worth it. You can throw

A bone to him from distance: let him know

By shaking your rod, so the earth gives back

3600

What locusts had removed and men now lack—

Those locusts will turn black immediately;

God's power to change will then be clear to see.

For I've no need for means to exercise

My power; those means' role is just to disguise,

So that the drug absorbs minds of physicians

And so astrologers look to the heavens,

And so false traders moved by greed, those who

Start trade at dawn, scared buyers might be few,

Without a wash—they don't obey as well—

3605

Craving food they become the fuel for hell.

The vulgar souls are eaten as they eat

Like lambs that graze on hay and happily bleat—

While that lamb grazes, butchers gleefully say:

"For us it grazes where it wants today":

When you consume you do the work of hell,

Fattening yourself up for its sake so well.

Do your own work—eat wisdom's daily bread,

So your majestic heart expands instead.

Bodily eating blocks this eating, men.

3610

Soul are the merchants, bodies highwaymen.

The merchant's candle lights up when the robber

Is burned like firewood and no more a bother.

You are that wisdom, but the rest restrain

And hide. Don't lose yourself. Don't strive in vain.
All lust is like hashish and wine inside,
Veiling wisdom, leaving men stupefied.
Wine's stupor's not the sole one of the wise;
Whatever's lustful closes ears and eyes.
Satan did not drink wine, yet he was vile, 3615
Intoxicated on pride and on denial.
The drunk is he who sees what isn't here—
As if pure gold, copper, and iron appear.
O Moses, this talk never will dry up.
Move your lips so the plants will all rise up.'
He did this and that moment all the ground
Turned green with crops and flowers all around.
Those people then jumped on the food, for they
Had all seen famine, starving till that day.
For several days they ate till full from feasts, 3620
Those close, the other humans and their beasts.
But once they'd eaten their fill, then those men,
No longer feeling need, rebelled again.
The self's like Pharaoh—don't give it relief
Or it will then recall its unbelief.
The self will not improve without fire's heat:
Only once iron's red do blacksmiths beat.
The body won't move if not hungry, friend;
You're beating iron that's cold, so in the end
Its weeping and its wailing desperately 3625
Do not mean it takes faith's vow earnestly.
Like Pharaoh, during famine it has needs;
It bows its head to Moses and it pleads,
But when its needs are met, it then rebels—
The donkey shakes its load off, kicks and yells.
It soon forgets, once its condition's better,
Its previous sighs and pleas. It won't remember.

A man lives many years in the same town.
His eyes close once his eyelids both slide down
In sleep—he dreams about another place, 3630
Forgetting his own home town's every trace,

Though he should think, 'I'm from here. This new city
 Is not my home town, so my stay's just temporary.'
 He thinks he's always been right there instead
 As if it's where he had been born and bred.
 If the soul won't recall its home, where it
 Was born and lived, don't be surprised one bit.
 Since, just like sleep, this world will cover up,
 As clouds will cover stars when you look up.
 It's stepped in many cities we could mention 3635
 And their dust hasn't left from its perception,
 And it's not striven hard to fully see
 What happened, for the heart's own purity,
 So that heart might stick up in view its head
 To see the start and ending up ahead.

The modes and stages of the creation of Man from the beginning.

First he came to the mineral realm, and then
 Moved onwards to the plant's stage, and again
 Lived at that stage till many years had passed
 And he could not recall his mineral past.
 Then he left that to be an animal 3640
 Without recalling being a plant at all,
 Besides this pull towards them he can feel
 In spring when herbs smell sweet, which hints it's real,
 Like what pulls babies to their mothers' chests,
 Though they don't know why they're drawn to those breasts,
 Like what disciples feel fill up inside
 Drawing them to the Sufi Master's side.
 The Universal Intellect's the source
 Of this: the shadow trails its source of course.
 The shadow fades in him eventually 3645
 And he attains the strong pull's mystery.
 How can another branch's shadow shake
 If this tree doesn't move. That's a mistake.
 Then the Creator leads him gradually

From animal rank to humanity.
He moves from realm to realm thus, state to state;
Now he's intelligent, informed, and great.
His previous intellects he can't remember
And from his present one he'll transform further,
So he'll escape this one that's full of greed, 3650
See many other marvellous ones, once freed.
Though, like the sleeper, he forgets his past,
That self-forgetfulness can't surely last.
He'll be led back to wakefulness again
And he will mock his present standing then:
'Why did I feel great while asleep—how could
I have forgotten those states that are good?
How did I not know such grief and afflictions
Are due to sleep's effects, its false perceptions?'

The world is like the sleeper's dream for sure; 3655
The sleeper thinks it's real and will endure
Till death's hour should approach him suddenly
And he's freed from the dark and trickery.
He'll laugh aloud at his past sorrows once
He sees his everlasting residence.
What you see while asleep, the good and wicked,
Will be made clear when you are resurrected.
What you did in this world's sleep will be shown
At your awakening's time, when all is known,
So you won't reckon that the bad deed once, 3660
While sleeping, won't have any consequence.
On that day, it will turn to tears instead,
Oppressor of the captives, so feel dread!
And count as happiness when you awake
The tears and sorrow now and every ache:
You who've torn Joseph's cloak will rise from sleep
As a wolf, though your slumber is now deep.
Your dispositions have turned wolf-like and
In anger they tear off your leg and hand.
After death, blood still seeks retaliation— 3665
Don't think: 'Once dead, I'll flee all tribulation.'

Retaliation we see here's not serious;
 Next to the one there it's a game that's frivolous.
 God called this world 'a game' for these same reasons:
 Its retribution's game-like next to that one's.
 This one is used to stop war and dissension;
 That one's castration, this one's circumcision.

*Explaining that the people in hell are hungry and moan
 to God: 'Make our daily portions bigger and quickly send
 provisions to us for we cannot endure any more.'*

This discourse could continue in this way:
 'Moses, just let those donkeys graze on hay,
 So they get fattened by that, then remember 3670
 That we have howling wolves who feel much anger:
 We're certain of our own wolves' howls, and we
 Will make those donkeys their food easily.
 Your sweet-breathed alchemy desired to make
 These donkeys human—that was a mistake.
 You tried hard with a generous invitation,
 But it was not these donkeys' destined ration.
 Let them be covered by the quilt of bounty,
 So heedless sleep will carry them off quickly,
 And when they rise from sleep another day 3675
 The cupbearer will then have gone away.
 Their disobedience kept you in confusion,
 So they'll taste sorrow during retribution.
 Our justice will in this way come to view
 And give each vile and hideous thing its due,
 Since that king whom they couldn't clearly see
 Was with them in their lives, though secretly.'

Wisdom oversees your own body too,
 Although it's something that you cannot view:
 To its perception you are manifest; 3680
 It sees you still, then move, and it will test.

If the Creator of that intellect
Is also with you, why should you reject
This fact? A man acts badly, leaving wisdom
And afterwards his intellect will blame him—
You're heedless of your intellect, but it
Did not forget you: when it blames you, it
Is present; if it were away instead,
Could it have blamed and slapped you on the head?
And if your self had really not been heedless, 3685
How should you have displayed such fervent madness?
Your astrolabe's your intellect and you:
Being's sun's nearness is traced by these two.
Your intellect's too close for me to write;
It's not in front, nor left, nor to the right.
How should the king not be near just the same,
Though mental search can't find ways to this aim.
The movement in the finger's not the kind
That comes from left, right, from front or behind.
In sleep and death it leaves the finger, then 3690
At waking's hour it joins with it again.
How does it reach your finger? You are clueless,
Although without it then your finger's useless.
The pupil of your eye and light for visions—
Where is their source beyond the six directions?
Creation's world has measurable directions;
The world of God's command has no dimensions.
When His command's world has no sides or border,
Then think how far beyond is the Commander!
The Knower and the wisdom were beyond it, 3695
Wider than minds, more spiritual than spirit.
With Him all creatures have a real connection
And that connection is beyond description.
The spirit has no joining or dividing,
But thoughts need both division and uniting.

Pursue what is beyond division now
Through guides, though it won't quench thirsts anyhow.
Pursue from distance to the origin,

Till manhood's vein leads you to union.
 How could mere reason find that great connection 3700
 When it is bound by joining and division?
 Mohammad counselled us with his insistence:
 'Do not investigate into God's essence!
 The essence that can be investigated
 Is not His essence if the truth is stated.
 That's an imagining, for on this way
 To God a million veils stand in the way.
 Each man's attached to one although he reckons
 That this veil is in actual fact God's essence.
 The Prophet rebuffed this imagining then, 3705
 So crazy thinking wouldn't mislead men.
 Such thinking leads some to lack reverence—
 God made such men fall headlong then at once.
 This means he falls down, but he might still reckon
 He has become a most important person.
 The drunkard's situation is unsound
 And similar: he can't tell sky from ground.
 Go, contemplate His wonders carefully,
 Lose yourself in His awesome majesty.
 Seeing His craftsmanship can make you humble, 3710
 So you won't talk about Him and be casual:
 Ahmad's '*I can't do justice*' is your answer,
 'For that's beyond all limits one can measure.'

Zo 'l-Qarnayn went to Mount Qaf and asked, 'O Mount Qaf, tell me about the majesty of God's attributes.' Mount Qaf said, 'His description is beyond words, for perceptions become annihilated before it.' Zo 'l-Qarnayn begged, 'Tell of His craftsmanship which you can perceive and can more easily speak about.'

Zo 'l-Qarnayn went to Mount Qaf and saw there
 That it was made of emerald so rare.
 Ringing the world, it formed a massive circle—
 He was left stunned by that enormous marvel

And asked, 'You are a mountain, but inform me
What are the others standing near your glory?'
'These other mountains are my veins, but they
Don't have my power and beauty the same way. 3715
In every town I have a hidden vein;
All regions are tied to them like a chain.
When God wants earthquakes somewhere, he tells me
And I make my veins throb immediately;
With wrath I move the vein for that direction,
The one to which that place has its connection.
When God says, "Stop!" my vein stops at His will;
I also rest though I'm in motion still.'
At rest like salve that acts invisibly 3720
And the still mind while we speak rapidly.
Earthquakes, to those whose brains can't understand
Are only due to vapours in the land.

*An ant walking on paper saw the pen writing and praised
the pen. Another ant with sharper vision said, 'Praise the
fingers, for I see the skill coming from them.' A third ant
with even sharper vision than the previous two said,
'I praise the arm for fingers are an extension of the arm,'
and so on . . .*

A small ant saw a pen write on some paper
And told another ant about this later:
'Such marvellous drawings that fine pen composes
Like basil, beds of lilies, and fine roses.'
'The finger is the artist here instead
Because it leads the pen,' the other said.
A third ant said, 'It is the arm in fact; 3725
Those fingers draw strength from it first to act.'
This argument continued in this way
Until a royal ant began to say:
'The forms do not compose that art seen there,
Since sleep and death both make them unaware.
Form is like clothing or a staff, you'll find.

Pictures are drawn just by the soul or mind.’
 It didn’t know the heart and mind without
 God’s changing them would be inert throughout;
 If He withdrew His grace for just one moment 3730
 The wise mind would do stupid things that instant.

When Zo ’l-Qarnayn found Qaf endowed with speech
 He asked it, ‘Would you kindly start to teach,
 O mystery-knowing, speaking one, and show
 To me God’s attributes, so I can know.’
 The mountain said, ‘Begone, for that description
 Is too enormous for an exposition,
 And for the pen to dare to write down data
 About it with its nib on scraps of paper.’
 He said, ‘So tell a story that is smaller, 3735
 O lovely, knowing one, about a wonder.’
 ‘Look in the distance scores of miles away:
 With snowy mountains He’s filled that long way
 Entirely, mountain after mountain, countless;
 The snow’s supply is one that is continuous.
 One mountain joins the next one that is found
 And snow brings frosty coldness to the ground.
 More snowy mountains stretching out for miles;
 Each moment from the storehouse come more piles.
 King, if this valley had not been thus placed, 3740
 The heat of hell would have left me effaced.’
 View heedless ones as snowy mountains who
 Ensure the wise ones’ veils aren’t burned up too.
 If not for that snow-forming ignorance,
 Mount Qaf would burn from longing’s fire at once.
 Fire is an atom of God’s wrath, in place
 As scourge to threaten harshly all the base.
 Despite such wrath that overpowers, you’ll see
 His mercy’s coolness has priority—
 Mystic priority beyond description: 3745
 Have you seen prior and subsequent in union?
 If not, that’s due to weakness of your brain—
 Next to that huge mine, brains are just one grain.

So blame yourself and not that higher dimension
 And its signs—how could clay birds reach their heaven?
 The bird flies in the air and can't rise higher,
 For it was nurtured from lust and desire.
 Without a 'yes' or 'no', be stunned today
 Until God's mercy carries you away.
 Since you're not capable of comprehending 3750
 If you say, 'Yes!' you'll only be pretending.
 Say, 'No!' and by this 'No!' your neck gets cut;
 And wrath will slam your window tightly shut.
 But if you swoon and fall down on the ground
 Then God's help will arrive from all around.
 Once you feel mesmerized and fall unconscious,
 You'll then say with your mystic tongue, '*Please guide us!*'*
 It's mighty, but when you begin to shake
 It may turn soft and moderate for your sake.
 The mighty form is for deniers—behind this 3755
 Once you submit, you will receive His kindness.

*The Angel Gabriel showed himself to Prophet Mohammad
 in his own shape, and when one of his seven hundred wings
 appeared it covered the horizon, and the sun was covered
 despite all its radiance.*

Mohammad once asked Gabriel, 'Let me see
 The way your form is in reality—
 Show me that clearly, so I look at you
 The way a spectator would like to view.'
 Gabriel said, 'You can't bear that spectacle;
 For your weak senses it's impossible.'
 'Show me so that this body witnesses
 Our senses' frailty and sheer helplessness.'

Man's bodily senses are weak and infirm; 3760
 Within him, though, his nature's strong and firm.

The body is like flint and steel—inside
 Its attributes can spark fires far and wide.
 Fire is produced by flint and steel ingredients,
 But then their child, fire, dominates its parents.
 The fire inside rules bodies just the same;
 It rules the body and can light a flame.
 The Abraham-like flame within has power*
 With which to overcome a fiery tower.
 The Prophet once said enigmatically 3765
‘We’re last and first, both simultaneously.’
 This pair’s form’s weak on anvils, yet its store
 Of attributes is greater than iron ore.
 Man springs from this world in his form, but in
 His attributes he is its origin:
 A gnat can cause his outward form to spin,*
 His inner holds the seven heavens within.

Mohammad asked till Gabriel showed a bit
 Of that might which can make huge mountains split.
 A single wing spanned East to West—in awe 3770
 Mohammad swooned due to what he then saw.
 Once Gabriel saw him witless due to fear,
 He came to hug him like one very dear.
 That awe is only the outsider’s ration,
 While friends receive for free this kind affection.
 When kings are on their thrones before the hordes
 Near them are scary guards who hold huge swords—
 The combination of guard, sword, and spear,
 Which would make even lions shake with fear,
 And yells of sergeants with their clubs aloft 3775
 From fear of which the people’s souls turn soft—
 This is all just in order to make known
 To passers-by their king’s there on his throne;
 The pomp is for the vulgar people’s sake,
 So they’re not arrogant then by mistake,
 To bring down selfishness in all those people
 And stop conceit from scheming up much evil.
 The kingdom’s safe from that when there’s a king

Who has the wrath to punish such a thing:
 Then those lusts die in souls—awe felt when near 3780
 The king prevents bad things from happening here.
 Yet in the private banquet he'll go to,
 How could there be awe and reprisal too?
 There's mercy and much clemency, not fear;
 Other than harp and flute there's naught to hear.
 In war, men bang the drums to drive away;
 In leisure with the chosen harps will play.
 The masses face account books for failed actions;
 Companions of the wine-jug fair attractions.
 In wartime helmet and chain mail are best, 3785
 While silk and music fit one's peacetime rest.
 This discourse could continue out of sight—
 Stop now, *God knows best guidance that is right.*

Mohammad's senses that were transient sleep;
 Under Medina's soil they're buried deep,
 But wondrous qualities of his that conquer
 Are on serenity's seat and don't alter.
 Bodily attributes are what decline;
 The soul's eternal; that sun will still shine.
It isn't of the East; it is unchanging. 3790
*It isn't of the West;** it isn't fading.
 How can one atom mesmerize the sun,
 Or moths make candles witless and undone.
 Mohammad's body did decay, so know
 That is what bodies have to undergo,
 And sickness, pain, and sleep; the soul is free
 From any similar kind of quality.
 I can't describe the soul—if I were able
 An earthquake would make this entire realm tremble.
 Senses seemed shaken temporarily? 3795
 Its soul's lion was then sleeping probably.
 The lion that's free from sleep was sleeping then;
 It was a meek and scared lion seen by men—
 The lion was acting sleepy then instead,
 So that the curs thought that he's virtually dead.

Otherwise who on earth would have the gall
To steal from weaklings even something small?

Mohammad's body was moved by that vision
And love of Gabriel's form stirred up his ocean.
The moon's a giving hand with vision's light; 3800
If it has no hand, that too is all right.
And if Mohammad had spread out his huge wing,
Gabriel would have been left forever swooning.
Mohammad passed the lote tree's high location*
And broke the limit too of Gabriel's station.
He said to Gabriel, 'Follow me and fly!'
'You go ahead. I can't,' was his reply.
Mohammad said, 'Burner of veils, come here.
I've still not reached my zenith in this sphere.'
Gabriel replied, 'My noble and good friend, 3805
My wings will burn beyond my limit's end.'
This fainting of the favoured in the chosen
Brings such amazement, records are all broken.
Mere fainting in this realm is simply play—
Why won't you rush to give your soul away?
O Gabriel, though you're noble and you're dear,
You're neither moth nor candle. This is clear:
Once it is lit the candle will invite
And moth-like souls don't fear being set alight.
Bury this topsy-turvy talk you've said— 3810
Make lions prey of onagers instead.
Stop up this water-skin of piss you've bottled.
Don't open up the gibberish you've prattled.
It's idle talk and nonsense with no worth
For those whose limbs have never left this earth.
*Deal with them; don't oppose them now, my dear,
Stranger, staying in their home now right here.
Give them what they want; try to satisfy them,
Traveller who's residing now in their realm.*
Until you reach the king and joy one day, 3815
Get on with men from Merv, O man from Rayy!*

Moses, you must speak softly now to teach

This era's pharaoh—speak *with gentle speech*.
 Pour water over oil that's boiling hot
 And you'll destroy your trivet and your pot.
 Speak softly, but don't say what isn't true:
 Don't be false with soft speech whatever you do.

It's afternoon so cut short this discussing,
 You who enlighten men with your juice-pressing.
 Tell the clay-eater sugar is much better. 3820
 Don't be soft; don't give clay to harm its eater.
 The soul's speech would have been a mystic garden
 If sounds and words were not what it depends on.
 Among the sugar canes, the donkey's head
 Leads many to get thorn-pricked where they tread:
 From far away they thought that's what they saw—
 Only a head—like bruised rams that withdraw:
 The word's form is that donkey's head you're seeing
 Within the vines of paradise and meaning.
 Hosam, O Light of Truth, bring here instead 3825
 Inside the mystic melon field that head,
 So after it has been skinned by the butcher,
 This place might let it grow back in the future.
 I make the form and you give that a soul—
 No, that's wrong. You make both parts of the whole.
 O sun, in heaven they all praise your name—
 Be praised on earth forever just the same,
 So that in heart and focus the terrestrials,
 And in their nature too, join the celestials.
 Dualism, polytheism, disunion 3830
 Will leave—in real existence there's just union.
 When my soul recognizes yours, at last
 It brings back that fine union from the past:
 Moses and Aaron may be comprehended
 Like milk and honey, sweet and nicely blended.
 But when it recognizes yet denies,
 Denial forms a veil that blocks its eyes.
 Many did this and turned from what they'd viewed,
 Angering the moon by this ingratitude.

That's why the bad soul couldn't recognize 3835
 The Prophet's soul and walked off from the prize.
 You've read all this. Read '*They would not leave off.*'*
 View stubbornness from infidels who'd scoff:
 Before Mohammad's form's manifestation
 Infidels used as their charm his description:
 They said, 'Someone like this will soon appear.'
 Their hearts raced thinking of his face with cheer.
 They bowed down, praying, 'Lord of all mankind,
 As soon as you can, show him to our kind!'
 So they could *ask God for a victory** 3840
 In his name, and defeat their enemy.
 Whenever frightening wars were started, they
 Turned to Mohammad's help when they could pray.
 And when there was a fatal malady,
 Mohammad's name was used as remedy.
 On their path his form entered deep inside
 Their hearts, their ears, their mouths, all open wide.
 His form can't be what a mere jackal sees—
 That was derived from it, like fantasies.
 If his form should appear on a wall's face, 3845
 Blood would seep from the wall's heart at that space;
 His form's appearance would leave it so graced
 That this wall would be spared from being two-faced.
 Two-facedness is its flaw that all can see
 Next to pure men's one-faced sincerity.
 As soon as they saw him, wind blew away
 Respect and love that they'd shown till that day.
 The false coin met with fire and changed in colour
 To black. The heart's one place false coin can't enter.
 False coin would boast of yearning for the touchstone 3850
 To throw disciples into doubt when still prone:
 The worthless wretch falls in their falsehood's snare;
 This doubt plagues wretched, base men everywhere.
 'If this were not real gold,' some would enquire,
 'How come the touchstone was its main desire?'
 It wants a touchstone, but another sort
 That won't expose its falseness and comes short.
 Touchstones that hide such attributes from sight

Aren't real for they lack mystic wisdom's light.
The mirror that hides flaws on a man's face 3855
For a mere cuckold's sake here has no place;
It's not a real one—it's a hypocrite.
Don't seek that mirror, but abandon it!

BOOK FIVE

Prose Introduction

In the name of God, the Merciful and the Compassionate, to Whom we appeal for help and in Whom we trust, Who has the keys of hearts. And may God bless the best of creatures, Mohammad, as well as his family and companions.

This is the fifth of the books of rhyming couplets and mystical explanations, clarifying that the *shari'at** is like a candle which shows the path; unless you obtain the candle the path cannot be travelled. Once you have come to the path, your travelling on it is the *tariqat*. * When you reach the destination, that is the *haqiqat*. * This is why it has been said: '*If the haqiqahs should appear, the shari'ahs would become void.*' * This is the same as when copper becomes gold, or was gold originally—it has no need for the theory of alchemy which is the *shari'at* and neither does it need to rub itself on the philosopher's stone, a process which is the *tariqat*, as it has been said: '*It is despicable to seek a guide after arrival at the goal, and abandoning the guide before arrival at the goal is also blameworthy.*'

In summary, the *shari'at* is like learning the theory of alchemy from a teacher or book, while the *tariqat* is applying the chemicals and rubbing the copper on the philosopher's stone, and the *haqiqat* is the transmutation of copper into gold. Those with knowledge of alchemy celebrate their knowledge of it, saying: 'We know the theory of this.' Those who actually carry out alchemy celebrate applying alchemy, saying: 'We are doing such works.' Those who attain the truth celebrate the truth, saying: 'We have become gold and are free from the theory and application of alchemy. We are God's emancipated ones.' *Each group is celebrating what they themselves have.* *

Alternatively, the *shari'at* may be compared with learning the science of medicine, the *tariqat* with restricting one's diet in accordance with the science of medicine or taking remedies, and the *haqiqat* with attaining everlasting good health and being free from the other two. When a man dies to this life, the *shari'at* and the *tariqat* become disconnected from him, and only the *haqiqat* remains. If he possesses the *haqiqat*, he yells: '*Oh, if only my people could know how my Lord has forgiven me!*' * But if he does not possess it, he yells: '*Oh, if only I had not been given my record of deeds and remained unaware of my reckoning! Oh, if only my death had been the final decree. My wealth has not availed me; my authority has perished and left me!*' * The *shari'at* is the theory, the *tariqat* is the action, the *haqiqat* is reaching God: '*Let whoever hopes to meet his Lord perform good actions and not associate anything with the worship of his Lord.*' *

Exordium

Light of the stars, Sultan Hosamoddin,
 Requests I start the fifth book he's so keen.
 O Light of God, noble Hosam, to me
 Teacher of teachers of true purity,
 If people were not veiled, impure and shallow,
 And if their throats were not so weak and narrow,
 I'd have done justice to you through your praise
 And opened my lips to much different ways:
 The falcon's shares aren't like the sparrow's shares; 5
 I have to speak simplistically for theirs.
 To praise you to the prisoners is a shame—
 Where mystics gather I will praise your name.
 It's wrong to speak to worldly men of you—
 Just like love's secret, I'll keep it from view.
 Praise will describe and rend the veil to teach—
 The sun, though, is beyond description's reach:
 The praiser of the sun is doing self-praise:
 'My eyes see; they're not blinded by its rays.'
 But it's self-blame if you should blame the sun— 10
 'My eyes are blind!' you're telling everyone.
 Feel pity if you come across one who
 Is envious of the fortunate sun in view.
 Can he block it from people's eyes today,
 Or from things that would otherwise decay?
 Or can he lessen its unbounded light,
 Or stand up to resist its high-ranked might?
 Whoever is the whole world's biggest envier
 Has envy that makes him stay dead forever.

You are beyond what intellects can know, 15
 So their descriptions always fall below.
 Although this intellect of mine is weak
 Still it now feels compelled to feebly speak:
Though something can't be captured totally,
It shouldn't be abandoned easily.
 Though one can't drink the whole flood up, one will

Drink water to one's actual limit still.
 If you won't let out now the mystery
 Use its shell to give us the power to see!
 Words only reach the shell that is external, 20
 But lesser minds think that it is the kernel.
 So far below the heavens is our sky,
 But looking from the ground it still seems high.
 I keep describing you, so they may yet
 Take the path while they can and flee regret.
 You are God's light and you draw souls to Him—
 Most live in darkness of mere doubt and whim.
 God's glorification is the precondition
 For this good light to give the blind eyes vision.
 The one prepared and striving finds the light, 25
 That one who's not in love with darkest night.
 Weak-sighted ones who roam at night will not
 Circle faith's cresset—that is not their lot.
 Difficult, subtle points are all in vain
 For those devoid of faith—it is their chain:
 While he displays his cleverness, that one
 Can't open up his eyes still to the sun.
 He doesn't raise a branch up like a tree.
 He makes holes in the ground like mice. We see
 Humans have four destructive qualities— 30
 They're wisdom's gallows, so watch out for these:

*Exegesis of: 'Take four birds and turn them towards you!'**

Wisdom's sun, Abraham, for us today,
 Kill these birds that attack those on their way,
 Because each of these four birds, like the crow,
 Plucks the eyes out of wisest men below.
 His birds are like those bodily qualities—
 Once slain the soul can soar beyond with ease.
 Abraham, to wipe good and bad from here
 Chop off their heads, so foot snares disappear!
 You are the whole and all are parts of you, 35
 Open the snares—their feet are all yours too!
 You make this world the soul's own nurturing ground,

Behind each army one knight can be found.
 Because the body holds four dispositions,
 They have been named the four birds of dissensions.
 Bestow eternal life's good luck to people
 By chopping heads of these birds that are evil.
 Bring them to life then in a different way
 Such that they cause no harm, unlike today.
 These four waylaying inner birds have made 40
 In people's hearts the home where they have stayed—
 Since you command the hearts in harmony
 In this age, and you are God's deputy,
 Chop off the heads of these four birds, and then
 Make everlasting all your transient men.
 The duck, the cock, the peacock, and the crow
 Stand for the soul's four bad traits that we know.
 The duck is greed, the cockerel is desire;
 Crows yearn for more, peacocks love ranking higher.
 What crows yearn and desire so ardently 45
 Is for the chance to live eternally.
 The duck's greed keeps its beak stuck in the ground,
 In land or water. seeking what's around.
 Its gullet doesn't rest a moment and
 God's '*Eat!*'* alone is its obeyed command.
 Like looters who ransack a house and fill
 Their sack with loot as fast as possible,
 Cramming in indiscriminatingly:
 Gold nuggets and chickpeas both, hurriedly.
 He crams in things of every kind in case 50
 Another looter comes soon to that place.
 Fearful that time's pressed and the chance is small,
 He grabs it all as fast as he can haul.
 He doesn't trust in his own ruler's power
 To stop a foe approaching him that hour.
 But the believer in his own salvation
 Takes his time raiding with deliberation.
 He's safe from loss from foes because he knows
 The power of God's wrath over all his foes;
 He's safe from fellow subjects coming there 55
 And wounding him to gain from this affair.

He's seen the just king hold back subjects—none
 Is left alone to harm another one,
 So he won't rush, but stays calm over there—
 He knows he's safe from losing his own share.
 He has a pure heart, acts with care and patience;
 He is content, unselfish, with forbearance.
 Acting with care is the Most Merciful's ray;
 Rushing is Satan's jostling you away
 Because he makes one scared of poverty 60
 And slays men's patience's steed wickedly.
 Heed the Qu'ran: the devil's evil scheme
 Is threatening poverty in the extreme.*
 So you'll take and consume vile things in haste,
 And not be blessed through good acts—what a waste.
 The infidel has seven bowels within—
 He grows fat, but his heart and faith grow thin.

The reason for the saying of the Prophet: 'The infidel eats with seven stomachs while the believer eats with one.'

Infidels were the Prophet's guests one time.
 They all came to the mosque at dinner-time:
 'We've come expecting hospitality, 65
 O king who welcomes all humanity!
 We've come with much need from a far-off place—
 Shower us with your special light and grace.'
 That just king who helps all men, strong or weak,
 Turned to his good friends and began to speak:
 'Friends, host a guest each so that you divide
 The work between you—you've my traits inside.'
 Armies are filled with their king and strike blows
 With their swords due to this at their king's foes.
 You slash your sword due to your king's rage now— 70
 If not how could you rage at brothers—how?
 The anger of your king reflects on you,
 Making you club your brother as you do:
 The king's the soul; his troops are filled with him:
 Soul's water filling streams up to the brim.
 If the king's spirit's water should be sweet

The streams fill with sweet water till complete.
 Since subjects follow their king's faith alone—
 The sultan of '*he frowned*'* has made this known.
 Each of the Prophet's friends then chose one guest, 75
 Among whom was one fatter than the rest.
 He was so huge he didn't get selected;
 Like a cup's dregs, he stayed behind, rejected.
 The Prophet chose this man spurned by the others.
 His goat herd had then seven milk-filled mothers
 That stayed inside his home, so they could be
 Milked there before the meal more readily.
 That greedy fat man then stuffed down his throat
 The soup, the bread, and milk from every goat.
 The household all grew angry then, each thinking 80
 About the goat's milk they longed to be drinking.
 The glutton tapped his drum-like belly when
 He had consumed the share of eighteen men,
 Then went up to his bedroom and reclined—
 The angry maid then slammed the door behind.
 She even chained the door from the outside,
 Enraged and hurt by that huge man inside.
 Then in the early hours that infidel
 Heard nature's call, with stomach pain as well—
 He hurried from his bed toward the door, 85
 But found it locked up from the corridor.
 That crafty man tried picking it, but he
 Could not unlock the door and thus break free.
 In that cramped room he kept on trying this
 with no success, perplexed in hopelessness.
 He went to sleep then after his failed scheme,
 And saw a desolate place within his dream.
 Since such an empty place was in his mind,
 Asleep he saw just some place of that kind,
 Then saw himself there far away from all 90
 And at that moment answered nature's call.
 On looking at his bedding once awake
 He saw it shit-filled due to this mistake.
 A hundred stresses then filled him inside
 At this embarrassment he could not hide.

'My sleep is worse than being awake, no doubt;
I eat shit one way, then I shit it out.'

He screamed out, 'Woe is me, oh woe is me!'

Like infidels in graves, so desperately.

Waiting just for the night to end, so then

95

He'd hear the room's door open up again

And scamper like an arrow from a bow,

So no one would see him in there and know.

This story's long but I will make it brief—

The door was opened; He ran in relief.

Mohammad opens the door of the bedroom for the guest and hides himself, so the latter does not see who opened it and get embarrassed, enabling him to walk out boldly.

Mohammad opened up the door at dawn,

Giving that lost one access to move on.

He opened it and then began to hide

To save from shame that stricken person's pride,

So he could boldly walk outside once more

100

And not see who had opened up the door.

(Either he was blocked out by something there,

Or God hid him so none would be aware.

'God's dye'* can cover up, miraculously

Veiling the viewer who would normally see,

So he can't see the foe right by his side;

God's power's many more times multiplied.)

Mohammad saw what happened there that night,

But God concealed him from that fat guest's sight,

So that a way out would appear from it

105

And he'd not fall disgraced inside a pit.

But it was destined by God's wisdom's sway

That he should see himself in such a way.

So many hostile acts will help in fact;

Destructions, too, can build and keep intact.

The soiled bedclothes through meddling intervention

Were brought then to the Prophet's close attention:

'Look here at what your guest did. It's so vile!'

*The Mercy to the Worlds** just gave a smile

And said, 'Bring me a bucket here, and then 110
 With my own hands I'll wash it clean again.'
 Each one jumped up to say, 'Don't do that, please,
 For God's sake! Not before your devotees.
 We'll clean this shit off—leave it! Please don't start.
 This is work for rough hands, not for the heart.
 God said "*By your life!*"* meaning yours alone,
 Made you His deputy upon the throne.
 We live in hope of simply serving you—
 If you do it instead, what can we do?'
 'I know that, but it's different now,' he said, 115
 'There's a deep reason I'll wash it instead.'
 They held back then: 'The Prophet thus decrees.'
 And watched to see revealed the mysteries.
 He scrubbed the shit off very carefully,
 Not for show or men's rules, but God's decree.
 'You wash this filth!' his heart said, so he'd hear,
 'Deep wisdom lies behind your actions here.'

The reason for that guest's returning to the Prophet's house at that moment when the latter was washing with his own hands his defiled mattress, and his feeling ashamed and rending his clothes and lamenting for himself and his luck.

That infidel wretch had a keepsake he
 Noticed he'd lost, and rushed back anxiously.
 He said, 'I've left an amulet I kept 120
 Always with me in that room where I slept.'
 Though quite embarrassed, he was ruled by greed.
 Greed is a dragon; it's not small. Take heed!
 He hurried in Mohammad's house's door
 And saw the Prophet in that room once more
 Cleaning the shit off for him on his own,
 As God's hand—evil eyes leave him alone!
 He then forgot his amulet and he
 Ripped off his collar so emotionally;
 He slapped his own face, then he slammed his head 125
 Against the door and wall until he bled.
 Then both his head and nose began to bleed—

That Prince felt pity though he had no need.
He screamed aloud and people gathered there—
That infidel said, '*People, please beware!*'*
He slammed his head. 'Brainless skull!' he'd protest.
He beat his breast and screamed 'O lightless breast!'
He then prostrated: 'O all planet Earth,
Before you shame fills up one of low worth;
You who are whole submit to His decree 130
While this mere part is lost in tyranny.
You who are whole shake meekly near His might,
While I, a part, challenge, resist, and fight.
He kept on looking at the heavens too,
Saying: 'Dear God, I don't dare look at you!'
Once he had trembled more than men can face
The prophet drew him close in an embrace;
He calmed him down and quietened his cries;
He gave him gnosis, opening up his eyes.
Unless the cloud weeps how can pastures grow? 135
Unless the baby cries breast milk won't flow.
A one-day-old knows just how to survive:
'I'll cry and that kind wet-nurse will arrive.'
The Ultimate Wet-nurse too—don't you see
Unless you cry His milk won't come for free?
God said, '*Let them weep much!*'* so heed His speech
Till milk of His grace flows towards your reach.
The sun's deep burning and the rainclouds' weeping
Are this world's pillars—join them as when weaving!
If not for sunshine's heat and raincloud's tear 140
Body and accident would not form here.
How would we have four seasons here if not
For weeping clouds and sunshine that's so hot?
Since tears from clouds combined with sunshine's heat
Are what maintains this world of ours so sweet,
Make wisdom's sunshine burn, continue keeping
Your eyes both glistening with the tears you're weeping!
Like babies you need weeping eyes—give up
This world's bread, for it dries good moisture up!
When body's leafy then the soul shakes all 145
Its leaves off like a branch does during fall.

A leafy body means the soul's decreased—
 Reduce the body, so the soul's increased!
 Now *lend to God** your body's leaves to start
 To make a pasture grow inside your heart.
 Loan it, and cut down all your body's food
 To see appear the face *no eye has viewed.**
 And when the body empties out its shit
 With musk and lovely pearls the Lord fills it.
 It gives its filth to get such purity, 150
 Gaining '*He'll purify you*'* luckily.
 The devil scares you, saying: 'Hey, watch out!
 You will be sorry with regret, no doubt:
 If you should waste your body now away,
 You'll be regretful and feel much dismay.
 Eat this! It's warm and good for your health too.
 Drink that! It's beneficial, healing you.
 Considering that the body is your steed
 What's best is that on which it likes to feed.
 Don't change your habits. Problems will then start: 155
 A hundred ailments in your brain and heart.'
 These are the devil's threats that are so evil.
 He also chants spells hypnotizing people.
 He makes out he is Galen just to trick
 And totally deceive your soul that's sick:
 'This helps with pain and grief,' he will repeat.
 He did the same to Adam with some wheat.*
 He chants spells and makes curious noises too,
 So he can force a feeder bag on you,
 As they do when they shoe a horse—you're prone 160
 To then see as a ruby a mere stone.
 He grabs you by the ears as if his steed
 And drags you towards coveting and greed.
 He puts a horseshoe on your feet, so aching
 Distracts you from the path you should be taking.
 His shoe is wavering and feeling doubt:
 'Shall I do this? Shall I do that?' Watch out!
 Do what the Prophet chose to do. Refrain
 From deeds of those who're childish or insane.
 '*Heaven is ringed by this,*' the Prophet said: 165

'*Hardships*, but they'll make crops thrive more ahead.'
The devil has his spells to cause mistakes,
Which lure to baskets even toughest snakes.
Though he be flowing water, he will block him;
Though he be the world's expert, he will mock him.
So join your intellect with a friend's then
Read and fulfil: '*their work's consulting men*'. *

*The Prophet soothed that Arab guest, calming his agitation,
weeping and lamenting over himself, which he did out of shame,
regret, and the fire of despair.*

This discourse can continue for it's endless.
That Bedouin was stunned by the king's kindness.
His reasoning left and he then grew insane; 170
Mohammad's intellect came to restrain:
'Come here!' The man began to stagger then
To him like one just up from sleep again.
'Come here! Come back now to your wits. Be clear
For there is much for you to do still here.'
To rouse him he splashed water on his head.
'God's witness, make me Muslim!' that man said.
'Let me bear witness to your faith. I'm weary
Of my existence—I'll leave this realm quickly.'
We're in the judge's court and He'll decree 175
On '*Am I not your lord?*'* for you and me,
For we said 'Yes!' when questioned on this once;
Our words and actions are our evidence.
Why are we silent at the judge's court?
Did we not come to witness and report?
Witness, how long will you stay captive here?
Bear witness now before dawn should appear!
You have been summoned to this place, so you
Will testify and stop your bad deeds too.
You've sat in this small dock, but you've kept shut 180
Your lips, with both your hands bound, obstinate.
How will you get out of this court unless
You testify, as should all witnesses?
It's just a quick task—do it and walk out.

Don't make a small task have to be dragged out.
 Whether one moment or a century,
 Discharge this trust and then you will be free.

*Explaining that ritual prayer, fasting and all external things
 are witnesses to the inner light.*

This fasting, pilgrimage, jihad, and prayer
 Give witness to convictions that you share:
 Alms-giving and abandoning jealousy 185
 Give witness to your secrets few can see.
 And hospitality with lavish food
 Declares: 'Guests, we're with you now for the good.'
 Gifts, souvenirs, and presents you give, too,
 Serve as the proof for 'I am pleased with you.'
 What does it mean to strive with wealth and prayers?
 'I have a jewel inside me,' it declares.
 'My fast and alms-giving are proofs from me
 Of piety and generosity.'
 Fasting: 'From lawful things he's shown abstention, 190
 So with forbidden things he's no connection.'
 Alms-giving: 'He gives from his own wealth, so
 How could he steal from pious folk we know?'
 If tricking others is his work, in short
 His proofs will all be voided in God's court.
 He is a hunter if he set up bait
 For trapping and not sating those who ate.
 He is a cat pretending now to fast
 And be asleep to catch his prey at last.
 He is suspicious with such trickery; 195
 He brings shame to those with true piety.
 Despite this one's corrupt ways, in the end
 God's grace will cleanse him of all that, my friend.
 God's mercy shall prevail and He'll bestow
 Light on that fraud more brightly than moons glow,
 God cleans his effort of impurity;
 His mercy cleans him of stupidity,
 A cap will cover all his baldness so
 The Lord's forgiving kindness is on show.

Water rained from the sky for this solution:
To cleanse impure ones of their own pollution.

200

*How water cleans impurities and how God cleans that
water of impurity. Undoubtedly, Exalted
God is most holy.*

Once water turned unclean from having cleaned
It was then snubbed by senses that had gleaned.
God took it back to goodness's vast sea
To wash that water's water generously.
The next year it came dragging its hem with it.
'Where were you?' 'In the sea of those with spirit.

I left here dirty and return now clean
With robe of honour from where I have been.

Polluted ones, come to me, for my nature
Has gained from that of the Divine Creator.

205

I will receive all of your ugliness
And, angel-like, give demons holiness,

When I become polluted I'll return
To purity's source for another turn.

I'll take off my defiled robe; He'll bestow
On me another pure robe. This I know.
He acts like this; I do the same—that's why.

The Lord of the worlds acts to beautify.'

Were it not for our own impurities

210

How could the water show its qualities?

It steals some sacks of gold from somebody

Then gives it all to those in penury.

It pours itself on grass that's newly grown,

Or washes dirty faces that are shown,

Or bears upon its head just like a porter

The ship that's tossing on the ocean's water.

A million remedies hide in it too

Since it is from that water that each grew.

Every pearl's soul, every seed's heart, you'll see

215

Enter the river like a pharmacy.

Orphans on land receive nutrition there,

Dried up and still ones power to move somewhere.

When it becomes depleted it gets turbid
 The same way we on land become so torpid.

How water prays to God for help after becoming turbid.

It cries from inside, 'O God, come and save me!
 I'm poor now that I've shared all that you gave me.
 Over the pure and impure I would pour
 Your wealth, Wealth-giving King, *is there some more?* *
 God tells the cloud: 'Transport it to good places; 220
 You, too, sun—draw it up to higher spaces!'
 He takes it on such different routes, till He
 Will finally lead it to the Boundless Sea.
 What's really meant by water here, of course,
 Is God's Friends' souls that wash those stains of yours.
 When they are darkened by creation's stain
 They head to heaven's purifier again.
 They bring back from there the acquired largesse:
 Lessons about His all-encompassingness.
 They liberate all from the dry ablution* 225
 And worrying about the prayer's direction.*
 They get sick through involvement with the rabble:
 '*Belal, revive us!*' *—they now seek to travel:
 Loud and sweet-voiced, Belal, do not forget
 Departure's drum up on the minaret.
 The soul soars up; the body stands there, calm.
 That's why when it returns it says: '*Salam!*' *
 This parable's a verbal means that's needed,
 So by the masses teachings will be heeded.
 None enter flames without protection on, 230
 Save salamanders which do not need one.*
 You need the hot baths as a barrier,
 So fire can make your body healthier.
 You can't, like Abraham, walk straight inside.*
 They're your apostle: water is your guide.
 Only God makes you sated without food;
 The sensual men know that they never could.
 Loveliness comes from God here without fail,
 Though sensual men need nature as a veil,

But once their bodies go, like Moses, they
Can see light from their breasts shine anyway.
The water's qualities have testified
That it is filled up with God's grace inside.

235

*How one's words and actions testify to the light and
consciousness within.*

Words and acts tell about the mind to you—
Infer about what's inside from these two.
Since your mind cannot penetrate inside,
Inspect the patient's urine from outside.
Actions and words are like the patient's urine—
They are the evidence physicians look in.
Spiritual healers enter souls through there,
And reach their faith by a route that's so rare.
Not needing acts nor words, they're set apart:
Beware, they're spies that watch the human heart!
Seek proof in words and deeds from people who
Join with the ocean not as rivers do:

240

*Explaining that the light within an enlightened person testifies to
that light by itself without words and actions needing to testify.*

Vast plains and deserts stretching out of sight
Are filled up by the realized mystic's light.
God's witness needs no witness—He'll suffice—
No kindness, hardship or self-sacrifice.
His essence's light has shone out, so he
Is free from ostentation, fortunately.
Don't seek proof from him, such as word and deed.
The two worlds blossomed through him like a seed.
What's testifying? Making veiled things shown,
Whether through speech, through acts or new means known—
These show the inner nature of the essence;
Attributes last, but these fade out in transience.
Gold's mark won't stay on touchstones, but the gold
Stays valued indisputably when sold:
Fasting, jihad, and prayer have also passed,

245

250

But souls remain much valued to the last.
 The soul showed speech and actions of this nature,
 Rubbing God's order's touchstone: 'O Creator,
 Here's proof my faith is sound. There's only doubt
 About the witnesses that have come out.'
 The witnesses must all have probity;
 One counts on truthfulness—it's necessary.
 To keep their word is for speech witnesses,
 Keeping their pledge is for act witnesses.
 False spoken testimony is rejected; 255
 Corrupt act witnesses will be ejected.
 Words and deeds shouldn't contradict if you
 Wish yours to be accepted as being true.
 'Your efforts contrast'*—you're in contradiction,
 Sewing by day, tearing by night in friction.
 Tell me who hears conflicting evidence
 Unless being kind through their munificence?
 Through word and deed unconscious mind's revealed;
 Each one reveals the secret that's concealed.
 Honest testimony will be accepted, 260
 Otherwise it's kept back, confined, rejected.
 So long as you contend they'll fight with you:
*Withdraw and wait for them; they're doing that, too.**

*How the Prophet offered to his guest the profession
of faith to become a Muslim.*

This discourse could go on. The Prophet then
 Offered him faith, and he joined Muslim men
 With Islam's testimony that is blessed,
 Which breaks apart chains deemed the sturdiest.
 The Prophet told him: 'Muslim, I invite
 You to remain here as my guest tonight.'
 He said, 'I'd love to be your guest forever, 265
 Wherever I should wander to, wherever.
 I am your slave, revived and freed by you,
 At your feast in this world and yonder too.
 If some should choose a different feast's spread, then
 Bones will tear up the gullets of those men;

Whoever goes to different ones will see
The devil share with him a cup for free.
No doubt the devil also takes aside
Whoever chooses to leave from your side:
If he goes on a journey without you 270
The devil goes and dines out with him too.
If enviously he mounts a noble horse,
The devil sits behind him there, of course,
And, if his wife's made pregnant by him, he
Shares with the devil its paternity.'
(In the Qur'an God says to Satan: '*Share*'*
Both wealth and children with them over there!'
The Prophet shed light on this mystically
In his elusive discourse with Ali.)
'God's Messenger, you've shown well', said that man, 275
'Your mission like the cloudless bright sun can.
You've done more than two hundred mothers can;
Jesus's spells could not with that dead man:
My soul's turned, thanks to you, to death's escaper;
Lazarus revived but still had to die later.'^{*}

This man became the Prophet's guest that night,
But drank just half his milk, shut his lips tight.
The Prophet urged, 'Drink more, eat cakes with me!'
He said, 'By God, I'm sated. Honestly!
This isn't affectation, for tonight 280
I am much fuller than the previous night.'
The Prophet's household were amazed he'd stop:
'Did the lamp fill up with just one oil drop?
And did the seed for one small bird then sate
An elephant's huge belly when it ate?'
Women and men with whispers would recount:
'Elephant-sized, but eats a flea's amount.'
Unbelief's greed and fancies dissipated;
With a small ant's food, dragons soon were sated.
From unbelieving's beggar's eyes once freed, 285
Faith's sweetmeats made him strong and without need.
He who would, out of hunger, shake, then found

Like Mary, heaven's fruit fall on the ground.*
 The fruit of paradise rushed to his eyes;
 His hell-like belly got a nice surprise.
 Mere talk about one's faith makes you content.
 Its essence, though, is bounty's nourishment.

Explaining that the light which is the food of the soul becomes the food of the bodies of the Friends of God, so that it becomes friends with the spirit, for the Prophet even said, 'Satan has accepted Islam at my hands.'

Although it is food of the soul and vision
 The body has a share in its division.
 The devilish body also used to scoff it 290
 'Satan turned Muslim,' is straight from the Prophet.
 How could the devil do that as he said,
 Unless he ate what can revive the dead?
 The devil loves this world, both deaf and blind;
 A different love can cut love of that kind.
 When it tastes certainty's wine from its cellar
 It then diverts its love that way forever.
O greedy belly, like this turn away!
Changing your food is now the only way.
Sick-hearted one, turn to the medicine. 295
A change in nature is the regimen.
Bondsmen of food still stuck in slavery,
If you can bear being weaned off, you'll be free.
In hunger there is much food—hope for it,
You timid person, and then hunt for it!
Feed on the light, be like eyes that are seeing!
Be like the angels, highest human being!
 Like angels, make the praise of God your food,
 So, like them, you may flee harm through what's good.
 If Gabriel pays the carcass little heed, 300
 He's stronger than the vulture that shows greed.
 In this world a fine feast has now been spread,
 Though hidden from the misers who're unfed.
 The world might be an orchard that's so nice,
 But mud remains the share for snakes and mice.

*How materialists deny the food of the spirit and tremble
longingly for the base kind of food.*

His food is mud, in winter or in spring—

That is for snakes, not for Creation's King.

The woodworm inside wood says foolishly:

'Who else has such fine sweetmeat just like me?'

The dungworm in the middle of some shit

305

Knows of no other sweet dessert but it.

Prayer

Show grace and favour, God, who has no peer,

Since, like an ear-ring, your words pierce each ear.

Drag us now by the ear to that assembly

Where wine is drunk by everyone who's merry.

Since You have sent a whiff of it, don't seal

The wine-skin, Lord of faith, we all appeal—

Female and male, both drink from You; Your aid

Is sought and Your bestowal's not delayed.

You answer even prayers that aren't spoken;

310

Each moment numerous times You make hearts open.

You have inscribed some letters—rocks have been

Transformed to wax, through love, once they have seen.

The eyebrow's C, the eye's O, the ear's J—

With these You've robbed the people's wits away.

Your letters crushed the mind. Keep writing, please,

Calligrapher with such rare expertise.

You fix imaginal forms too in Non-being

Each moment fit for every thought and feeling.

You've etched onto imagining's tablet eyes,

315

Cheeks, beauty marks, and letters people prize.

I will stay drunk and set on Non-existence

For Its Beloved's truer than existence.

He helped the intellect read such shapes, friend,

So He could make deliberations end.

Comparison of the Preserved Tablet and every person's intellectual perceptions from it of their faith, the decree, and their daily share to the everyday perceptions of the Angel Gabriel from the Most Mighty Tablet.**

Like angels, wisdom this way gains possession,
 From that same Tablet, of its daily lesson.
 See script etched with no fingers in Non Being!
 Its marks make people crazed by what they're seeing.
 By fancies everyone is captivated 320
 And digs in hope of gold, intoxicated.
 A fancy fills one man with pomp and he
 Heads over to the mountains hurriedly.
 A fancy leads another one to take
 The hard path to the sea for a pearl's sake.
 Another to the hermitage. Through greed
 Another is inspired to sow his seed.
 A fancy makes one waylay he who flees,
 Turns others into salve for injuries.
 It makes one summon spirits magically 325
 And someone else count on astrology.
 He sees their different acts from the outside
 Spring from the various fancies found inside.
 Each one's amazed at how the others act—
 Each has a different taste of things in fact.
 If fancies didn't have variety
 How did believers gain plurality?
 Since the soul's prayer niche has been made obscure.
 Everyone faces different sides, unsure:

Comparison between different practices and aspirations and the difference of opinion among those who seek the direction for prayer at prayer-time in the dark and the divers who search on the bottom of the sea.

Like those who seek the Kaaba and then face 330
 Towards the side they guess leads to that place.
 And when the Kaaba's seen at break of day,

It is revealed which people lost their way;
 Or like the divers on the ocean's floor,
 Each picking up with haste things for the shore;
 In hope of precious pearls or jewels, they throw
 Inside their bags the things they've found below—
 Once they rise to the surface of the sea
 Who found a pearl is then known visibly,
 And who brought up the tiny pearls as well, 335
 And who brought pebbles up or just a shell.
They will endure at Judgement Day's location
 The well-known, overwhelming tribulation.
 Similarly, like moths each group now flies
 Around a candle right before our eyes.
 They fix themselves on one flame and then circle
 Around their own particular bright candle,
 Hoping for Moses's fire that would turn
 The bush more green although it made it burn.*
 Each group has heard of that fire's grace and they 340
 Imagine that each spark acts the same way.
 At dawn's break when Eternal Light is seen
 Each candle flame reveals what it had been.
 And if good candles burned their wings before
 They now receive from that source eighty more,
 But many moths with sealed eyes shall instead
 Stay under the bad candles, filled with dread,
 Wings burned, regretful, anguished, breathing sighs,
 Lamenting that vain lust which sealed their eyes:
 Their candle tells it, 'I'm burned as you see— 345
 How can I free you from fire's tyranny?'
 It weeps and adds, 'My head's consumed, undone—
 How then can I light up another one?'

*Exegesis of 'Alas for the slaves of God'**

'Your forms deceived me,' those moths will then state,
 'I saw your actual nature far too late.'
 The candle's now snuffed out and wine's run dry
 While the Beloved hides from the weak eye.
Profits have turned to loss and penalty.

We moan to God of blindness bitterly.
The brethren's souls are sound, believing, true, 350
Surrendering to God, and faithful too.
 Everyone's turned his face in their directions
 While the elite turn far beyond dimensions.
 A different path is taken by each pigeon,
 But this sort flies beyond each physical region.
 Neither domestic birds, nor those that soar,
 Our seed's beyond all seeds and came before.
 Our daily bread is ample since our stitching
 The cloak that we wear has transformed to ripping.

The reason why 'faraji' was first used for
 the garment of that name*

A Sufi tore his cloak while in distress 355
 And then relief came to make him feel less.
 He called '*faraji*' that cloak that he'd torn,
 God's Friend's name for it then became well-known.
 However, he alone knew its true meaning;
 The dregs-like word is all that reached men's hearing—
 God keeps the truth of each name and leaves here
 The dregs-like words that in no way come near.
 The ones embracing dregs think mud's for eating;
 The Sufi though will eagerly choose meaning.
 He says, 'Dregs have an essence that is pure' 360
 That prompts the heart to purity, for sure.
 Dregs are hardship; their essence is repose.
 The former's raw, the latter ripe. God knows.
 Ease comes with hardship, but you shouldn't fret:
 After death there's a path to more life yet.
 If you want peace, son, rend the cloak, then you
 Might rapidly become a pure one too—
 Sufis are those who seek such purity,
 Not patched wool-wearers who crave sodomy.
 'Sufi' means to the vulgar who are base 365
Patching clothes and vile sodomy's disgrace.
 In hope of purity and a good name

It's good to wear such clothes, but then your aim
 Must be its meaning and true principle,
 Not like the fancies-worshippers who're ill.
 Your fancy is the club of jealousy:
 It's beauty's palace's security.
 It blocks the seeker: 'There's no access here!'
 Every fancy says 'Stop!' when people near,
 Except to the wise, sharp-eared one with fervour 370
 From God's help's army as His special favour—
 He won't retreat from fancies and he's not
 Blocked thanks to the King's arrow that he's brought.

On this bewildered heart, dear God, bestow
 Some order and give arrows to the bow,
 Since, from the hidden cup, you've poured some out
 On soil *from the cup of the most devout*.
 On curls and cheeks that mouthful's trace is found—
 That is the reason kings will lick the ground.
 Beauty's mouthful is on that ground you kiss 375
 Night and day with your heart's full tenderness.
 That soil-mixed mouthful turns mad one like you,
 So think what in its pure form it can do!
 Frenzied, men rip their shirts before a clod,
 Since it gained drops of beauty straight from God.
 On both the sun and moon there is a mouthful,
 On Saturn too, and on His throne and footstool.*
 Mere mouthful or elixir? Please reflect
 On seeing beauty rise from its effect.
 Seek seriously its contact, marvellous one: 380
 '*Only the purified can touch this one.*'*
 There's some on rubies, pearls, and also gold,
 On wine, desserts, and fruit, if you'd behold,
 And on the faces lovely and divine—
 How marvellous must be this special wine!
 You stick your tongue in soil to taste a bit—
 Imagine when without soil tasting it!
 When that pure mouthful on the Final Day
 Separates through one's death from bodily clay,

You'll bury what's been left behind away 385
 Since severance makes it ugly in that way.
 When souls show beauty with no carcasses
 That union's finer than I can express.
 When the moon shines without clouds in the way
 Its glory is beyond what words can say.
 How lovely is the kitchen with sweet honey—
 All lick their plates though they might have much money.
 How lovely is that large stack in faith's field—
 All other stacks are fragments of its yield.
 How great that sea of life is with no grief— 390
 The seven seas seem dewdrops on a leaf.
*Alast's** cupbearer poured a mouthful on
 This barren, abject soil that we stamp on
 And we emerged from that, grew fervent too—
 Pour some more since what we should not we do!
 I'd have complained of non-being if permitted
 Or stayed in silence if it's prohibited.
 This is the story of the duck of greed—
 Abraham showed it should be killed, not freed.
 There's much more in the duck of good and evil, 395
 But I fear missing vital things for people.

*Description of the peacock and its nature and
the reason why it was killed by Abraham.*

The peacock that's two-coloured is to blame:
 It play-acts to show off and earn a name.
 It seeks to trap, but has a clueless brain
 That can't tell good and evil, loss and gain.
 It will entrap its victims like a snare,
 But of its purpose it's still unaware.
 By trapping does it harm or benefit?
 I have spent too much time on pondering it.
 Brother, you've lifted up friends, then departed 400
 After all the affection you had started.
 Since birth this is what you have done out there:
 You trap them with your love's affection's snare.

From hunting and the airs of self-existence
Did you gain something worthwhile in that instance?
It's late and your life nearly has run out
Yet you still earnestly hunt people out,
Catching one, then releasing one confined,
Hunting again like men of the worst kind.
Releasing that one, seeking with your snare— 405
This game's for children who are unaware.
Your snare's still empty once the sun has set—
Shackles and headaches are the most you get.
You hunted then yourself with your own snare,
Became caged and did not reach your goal there.
Are there trap-owners who will only cage
Themselves like us, so dumbly, in this age?
Ordinary people's hunting is pig-hunting—
They're not allowed to eat it; it's just suffering.
Only love is worth hunting, but how can 410
That be contained in traps by any man?
You should perhaps instead become His prey—
Enter His trap, abandon yours today.
Love's whispering in your ear: 'Being prey is better
Than trying to instead be a trap-setter.
Make yourself My fool: be a stupid one;
Turn to a mote and give up being a sun!
Be homeless and then settle at My door;
Be moths, don't claim you're candles any more,
So you might taste life's savour finally— 415
See kingship hidden inside slavery.'
In this world you see things so upside down:
Bondsmen get called 'king', though they've fallen down:
'Here is a monarch!' now the huge crowd bellows
To someone tied up, climbing to the gallows.
Like infidels' graves, so ornate outside
While filled up with God's wrath on the inside.
One's plastered tomb-like, but to no avail—
They've just put on him self-conceit's thick veil.
With virtues plastered on what's destitute, 420
Your nature's a wax tree that has no fruit.

Explaining that everyone knows the mercy of God and everyone knows the wrath of God, and everyone flees the latter and clings to the former, but God has hidden wrath in mercy and mercy in wrath. This is God's scheming and disguising, so people who discern and see through God's light can be distinguished from those who see only what is immediately visible.

One dervish to another: 'Please now share
 What it was like to see God's presence there!'
 The other said: 'It's indescribable,
 But for your sake I'll give a parable:
 I saw Him and to His left stood a flame
 While to His right a pure stream just the same,
 A fire that can burn worlds on His left side
 Like that, a lovely stream on His right side.
 One group raised their hands to the fire; another 425
 Appeared so drunk and happy from that Kawsar.
 It was a topsy-turvy game they had
 For everybody, whether good or bad:
 Those who went to the flames would raise their head
 And come out of the water's side instead.
 Those who went to the water suddenly
 Were found inside the fire for all to see;
 Those who went to pure water on the right
 Emerged from flames on the left in plain sight;
 Those who went to the burning flames instead 430
 Were seen on the right side to raise their head.
 Few know the secret of this mystery,
 Hence few approached the fire predictably,
 Except those who had then been specially blessed—
 For fire they shunned the water in this test.
 Most of them made immediate lust their god,
 So in this they were victims of a fraud.
 Troop after troop in haste with greed would flee
 To water and shun fire so heedlessly—
 These ones emerged from fires, so you beware 435
 O you who have remained still unaware.
 'Stupid fools, I'm not fire,' the fire would scream;
 'I am the blessed fountain and the stream.'

You simply were hoodwinked, blind one, back then.
 Enter me, and don't run from sparks again.'
 Abraham, there's no spark or smoke in here—
 There's only Nimrod's fraud, so have no fear.*
 If you are wise like Abraham, the flame
 Is water to you, moth, so fire's your aim.
 The moth's soul can be always heard to bawl: 440
 'I wish I had a million wings, so all
 Could burn in that fire that burns mercilessly
 And the outsiders' hearts and eyes not see.
 The stupid pity me; they're asinine.
 I pity them through vision that's divine.'
 That fire which is the soul of waters too—
 Moths act the opposite to what hearts do:
 They see bright light and enter fire; the heart
 Sees fire, then to the light it will depart.
 Glorious God plays this game, so He can show 445
 Who is from Abraham's kin here below.
 A fire's been given water's form; a fountain
 Now gushes in the fire as on a mountain.
 Magicians conjure plates of rice, but then
 The plates look full of worms to other men;
 Or scorpions fill a house due to mere sorcery,
 But there is not one scorpion in there actually—
 When sorcery can display such things to you
 Imagine what its Maker then can do!
 Of course it's fallen every century 450
 Beneath God, woman-like in missionary.
 These sorcerers were servants over there
 And, just like sparrows, they'd fall in the snare.
 Read the Qur'an on lawful sorcery
 Bringing down *mountain-sized plots** easily.
 I am not Pharaoh heading to the Nile—
 Like Abraham, I enter flames and smile:*
 I'm *flowing water*,* though as fire I seem
 Since water's turned to fire in this strange scheme.
 The liberal Prophet truthfully would say: 455
 'Intellect's better than to fast and pray.'
 It is an essence, while the other two

Are accidents required of men like you,
 So that the mirror shines back radiantly
 Since purity comes in through piety,
 But if the mirror at its root is wrong
 Then burnishing that mirror takes too long,
 While the fine mirror is like fertile soil
 And needs just minor polishing, not toil.

*The differences between intellects in their original created
 nature, in contradiction of the Mu'tazilites* who claim:
 'In origin all particular intellects were equal, and
 any superiority and differences are due to
 learning, training, and life experience.'*

The intellects are different from each other 460
 In levels from here to the sky, my brother:
 One intellect's like the sun's orb, superior,
 One less than Venus and a simple meteor.
 One flickers like a lamp about to die,
 The other burns like stars up in the sky,
 Such that when clouds drift so that it's in sight
 It will give wisdom that can see God's light.
 Particular intellect gives a bad name
 To Universal Intellect, with shame.
 The former suffers, hunting in greed's sway, 465
 The latter serves as the True Hunter's prey.
 The former's served now, but has lost what's glorious;
 The latter will be raised due to its service.
 Like Pharaoh, mere waves make the former fail;
 The latter flees like Sohrab every gaol.*
 Checked by the queen in topsy-turvy games,
 It's down to you—don't scheme for selfish aims!
 You trust your plots and fancies just like weavers—
 The Self-sufficient one bars all such schemers.
 Be clever through good service, then you'll be 470
 A prophet soon in your community.
 Be clever till you're rid of your own schemes,
 Till severed from your body as in dreams,
 Till you become the lowest slave, for then

Through being less you'll be a lord of men.
But, wolf, don't mix that foxiness that's sly
With service to become lord. Then you'd lie.
Instead rush like a moth into the flame—
Don't hoard your service! Gamble in this game!
Quit force, embrace abasement and don't fear!
God's Grace goes to abasement, O fakir!
The thirsty one's distress is genuine;
Pretending you're distressed is like a sin—
When Joseph's brothers wept it was a trick,
Because they were all envious and sick.*

475

Story about that Bedouin whose dog was dying of hunger while his bag was full of food, and how he lamented over his dog, recited poetry, and wept and beat his head and face, yet would not give his dog a scrap of food from his bag.

A Bedouin wept when his dog was dying;
‘O how I suffer sorrow!’ he was crying.
A beggar passing by asked, ‘Why these tears?
What caused this grief? Why sorrow and such fears?’
‘I’ve a good-natured dog,’ its owner said,
‘But look there in the street—he’s almost dead.
He’d hunt for me by day, stand guard at night,
Fierce hunter and thief-fighter with sharp sight.’
‘What’s wrong? Has he been wounded by a blow?’
‘Severest hunger is what’s brought him low.’
The beggar said, ‘Patience with trials you face!
The patient as reward receive God’s grace.’
Then he asked, ‘O great chief, what’s in this sack
You’re holding that looks full? What do you lack?’
‘That is my food from last night which I take
Along with me for my nutrition’s sake.’
‘Why don’t you give that to the dog instead?’
‘I’m not that generous!’ then the Bedouin said.
‘Without money a traveller can’t get food
But tears are free, so I’ve done what I could.’
‘Shame on you, pompous fool!’ the beggar said,
‘You value more than tears a crust of bread.’

480

485

Tears are blood changed through grief, while actual blood
 Spilt pointlessly is worth much less than mud.
 The Bedouin made his whole self so base 490
 Like Satan—nothing good left, not one trace.
 I am slave to that one you'll never find
 Selling himself except to God, the Kind.
 When he should weep rain pours down from the sky;
 When he should moan, 'O lord!' the heavens cry.
 I am slave to the copper that you see
 That only breaks itself for alchemy.
 Raise broken hands in prayer now, for God's grace
 Races to those who're broken at fast pace.
 If you need to escape this narrow pit, 495
 Rush to the fire and stop delaying it.
 Observe God's scheming; quit your own, my brothers,
 Because His scheming puts to shame all others.
 You'll open up a wondrous hiding-place
 Once your schemes drown in God's without a trace.
 Eternal life's the least gain you will see,
 Ascending higher up eternally.

*Explaining that no evil eye is as deadly for a man than the eye of
 self-approval, unless his eye has been transformed by
 God's Light, so that 'he hears through Me and sees
 through Me'* and his self has become effaced.*

Don't notice peacocks' feathers, but their feet
 In case the evil eye gives you defeat,
 For that eye makes the mountains tremble too— 500
 Recite: '*They make you stumble*'* for a clue!
 That evil gaze made great Mohammad fall
 On the dry road with no rain there at all—
 'Why did I fall?' he wondered with more stress,
 'What was the reason? It's not meaningless.'
 Until the verse arrived to clarify:
 'Enmity caused it with the evil eye.*
 Other men would have been obliterated
 Right then: the evil eye's prey, decimated.
 A guard swept you to safety and your fall 505

Served only as a warning sign, that's all.'
Learn from that mountain-like man causing awe—
Do not expose your leaf! you're less than straw.

*Exegesis of 'Those who disbelieve cause you to stumble with their gaze.'**

O Prophet, there are some within that group
Who with their eyes strike vultures as they swoop—
Their evil gaze can split apart the head
Of a fierce lion, so it groans in dread.
One casts a death-like glance on camels, then
Sends after them a slave among his men:
'Go and fetch me some of those camels' fat!' 510
The slave sees camels on the road, stretched flat,
Each with its head chopped off still lying there,
Though they used to race horses everywhere.
Through fear of envy and the evil eye
The stars would change their orbit in the sky.
Water's what makes the water-wheel turn round
Although when you look water can't be found.
The evil eye's cure is the good eye, friend—
With one blow it makes that eye's presence end.
It comes from mercy—always that prevails; 515
The evil eye's from wrath, which always trails.
His Mercy overcomes all wrath, and so
Each Prophet vanquished his most bitter foe.
And the result of Mercy was the Prophet;
Nasty foes came from wrath, but he could stop it.
The lust of ducks is less then peacocks' pride,
A snake next to a dragon multiplied:
The duck lusts after food and sex, but lust
For power is much worse—knowing is a must:
Status-seekers claim they've divinity— 520
How can they be forgiven easily?
Adam fell due to lust and greedily eating,
While Satan fell from pride and status-seeking.
Adam begged quickly for forgiveness first,
But Satan was too proud to—he stayed cursed.*
The lust for food and sex requires contrition,

But it is not as bad as proud ambition.
 Another book would have to be composed
 So hunger for power's root can be exposed.
 The Arabs call rebellious horses 'Satan', 525
 Not those that stay in fields where they've been taken.
 'Satan' here means rebelling, disobeying—
 This quality deserves our curse and blaming.
 One table's spread can feed so many eaters,
 The world's too small though for two power-seekers—
 Each cannot bear the other standing there,
 Thus kings kill their own fathers not to share:
 'Kingship is childlessness'—did you not hear;
 Power-seekers cut family ties through fear:
 Such a one is then childless, with no son, 530
 Like fire, not family with anyone—
 He burns and ruins all things in his way;
 On gaining naught, he burns himself away.
 Become naught, flee from his jaws and don't start
 Seeking mercy from his hard anvil heart!
 And don't fear anvils once you've been effaced—
 Learn from absolute poverty's sweet taste.
 Divinity, cloak of the Glorious One,
 Becomes a bane to others trying it on.
 The crown is His; ours is the belt of service— 535
 Do not exceed the limit of your office.
 Your peacock feathers are your bane, beware!
 They make you claim in holiness a share.

Story about the sage who saw a peacock tearing out its beautiful feathers with its beak and flinging them down, thereby making its body ugly and bare. In astonishment he asked, 'Don't you feel regret?' The peacock answered, 'I do, but life is dearer to me than feathers and these feathers are the enemies of my life.'

A peacock one day plucked its feathers out
 Just when a sage was wandering about
 In the same field: 'What lovely feathers, yet
 You're pulling them all out without regret!
 How does your heart let you tear off your clothes

And fling them on the mud as things one loathes?
Qur'an reciters even use a feather 540
Of yours as bookmark, which they deeply treasure.
Fans are made from your feathers that are rare
To circulate for us the healthy air.
You shun what you should have appreciated—
You don't know God's the one who decorated!
Maybe you do know, yet show this disdain
To tear embroidery out and stay so plain?"
Many disdains are sins that we could mention;
They send the slave far from the King's attention.
To show disdain is sometimes sugar-sweet, 545
But don't be tempted—danger's what you'll meet.
The path of need is the securest way—
Follow that path and quit disdain today.
So many flapped their wings and showed disdain,
But in the end it was those people's bane.
Disdain's sweet taste may briefly now delight you,
But it hides fear and dread that will soon find you.
Though neediness might make you turn thin, soon
It makes your breast shine brightly like the moon.
Since He brings out the living from the dead 550
Those who have died were guided well ahead;
And He brings dead ones out from living ones—
The living self heads to its death, my sons.
Become dead so *the Everlasting One*
Brings out the living then from you, dead one:
Become December—see soon spring's revival;
Become night and you'll see the day's arrival.
Don't tear out feathers that you can't replace;
In grief, good-looking man, don't scratch your face
Which looks just like the radiant morning sun— 555
It is a big mistake to scratch that one.
Scratching it with your nails is unbelief,
And causes the moon's face to weep in grief.
Perhaps you can't see your own bright face, friend?
Come, bring your stubbornness now to an end.

Explaining that the purity and simplicity of the tranquil soul are disturbed by thoughts, just as when you write or sketch something on a mirror and, even after wiping it off afterwards, a mark and blemish remains there still.

The face of the calm soul at peace within

Suffers scratches from thoughts that enter in:

Consider bad thoughts poisonous nails that scratch

The soul's face each time that such thoughts should hatch.

It's just like sticking a gold spade in shit

560

To loosen thus a knotted part with it.

Suppose the knot is opened there eventually—

It's just a tight knot on a purse that's empty.

You have grown old untying knots, my friend—

So what if some get opened in the end?

The tight knot on our gullets all the while

Is what decides if we are good or vile.

Solve this big puzzle if you are a man;

Spend all your energy thus if you can!

You know what's 'essence' and what's 'accident'—

565

Learn your own meaning. That's more pertinent.

Once you know who you are, flee this and go

To That One who's beyond what such things show.

'Subject' and 'predicate' steal your attention;

Blind life is spent on what you hear men mention.

Every proof with no outcome in the end

Is vain. Reflect upon the outcome, friend!

You've seen each maker only through things made,

Content with syllogisms men have said.

Philosophers with proofs link bit to bit,

570

But the elect do just the opposite:

From proofs and veils these mystic greats would flee

For the Proved One, then bow submissively.

Though, to the former, smoke is proof of fire,

We love the smokeless fires in realms much higher,

The fire from close to Him especially—

It's nearer than the smoke that one can see.

If one should flee the soul just for the sake

Of some imagined smoke, that's a mistake.

*In explanation of the Prophet's words: 'There is no
monasticism in Islam'.*

Leave plumes, detach your heart from them instead! 575
 Each war requires a foe whom you want dead.
 War is impossible without a foe;
 Without lust how can you opt to forgo?
 If you don't crave it how can you hold back?
 If there's no foe, no troops need to attack.
 Don't be a monk, don't get castrated, friend!
 Lust is what tempts your chastity to end.
 One can't forbid lust if no lust is here:
 You cannot fight the dead; this should be clear.
 God has said, '*Spend!*'* so first earn to be ready— 580
 One can't spend if one hasn't earned already.
 Though absolutely '*Spend!*'* is what He said,
 '*Earn, then spend!*'* is what really should be read.
 Since the King said, '*Restrain yourself!*'* likewise
 There must be something from which to turn eyes.
 Thus '*Eat!*'* is for the snare of lust and greed,
 While for your modesty: '*Do not exceed!*'*
 Without a predicate being used at all
 To have a subject is impossible:
 If you have never been enduring pain, 585
 Then no reward will come for you to gain.
 More self-restraint will mean more bountiful
 Rewards that give delight to heart and soul.

*Explaining that the reward for the work of the lover of
God is God Himself.*

He is the lovers' joy and misery;
 He is their payment and their salary.
 If something else is still distracting you
 Then it's a trivial thrill, not love that's true.
 Love is that flame which, once it blazes up,
 Burns everything but the Beloved up.
 Slay other than God with the sword of '*No!*'* 590
 Then see what's left and what that has to show.

The rest will vanish; only God will stay—
 Rejoice, love! You burn polytheism away.
 He is both First and Last—there's no division.
 Polytheism comes from cross-eyed vision.
 All beauty's His reflection. Wonderful!
 The body does not move but through the soul;
 The body in a damaged soul will not
 Turn sweet though put inside a honey pot.
 The one who knows this was alive once, and 595
 Took a cup from the Soul's soul with his hand.
 One whose eyes haven't seen those cheeks at all
 Believes this smoky vapour is the soul.
 Not having seen the most just caliph either,
 He thinks Hajjaj was a fair-minded leader.*
 Not seeing Moses's staff change, they see
 A real life in the ropes of sorcery.*
 The bird that hasn't drunk pure water will
 Dip its wings in the briny water still.
 Things are known by their opposites alone— 600
 Once one feels wounds, then soothing will be known.
 That's why you face this world now and not last—
 So you'll enjoy the realm known as '*Alast*'.*
 Once you flee here you go up there once more,
 Grateful for the eternal sugar-store.
 'There I just sifted dust,' you then will say,
 'From this pure world I tried to keep away.
 I wish I came here earlier than now
 So I'd have suffered less in mud somehow!'

Exegesis of the saying of the Messenger of God: 'None died without later wishing that they had died before they actually did—if they were pious, so that they might have reached felicity sooner; if they were wicked, so that their wickedness might have been less.'

That's why the Prophet who knew all things said: 605
 'One who dismounts his body once he's dead
 Does not feel bad for his death and homecoming
 But for what he'd omitted, each shortcoming.
 Whoever dies then wishes he had gone

To his new destination earlier on
So his bad deeds would have been less, or rather,
If he was good, so he'd have come home faster:
'I have been clueless,' bad men will then say,
'Increasing my veils with each passing day.
If passing through this world had been more quick, 610
The veils on me would not have been so thick.'

Don't rip contentment's face so greedily!
Through pride, don't rip that of humility!
Don't rip generosity's through avarice,
Nor good prostration's face through wickedness!
The sage said, 'Don't tear plumes that beautify
Paradise—don't tear what lets you soar high.'
On hearing this advice, it suddenly
Looked at him, then cried out so mournfully,
Weeping and moaning painfully for so long 615
That everyone joined in as it felt strong.
Anyone who had asked, 'Why tear them out?'
Regretted it and didn't wait about
For answers: 'Why did I ask curiously?
It filled with grief; it was made worse by me.'
Tears dropped down from its face and each within
Contained a hundred answers folded in.
The soul is moved by weeping that's sincere—
Even the heavenly throne would shed a tear.
The hearts and intellects come from that realm 620
Though the celestial light is veiled from them.

*Explaining that the spirit and intellect are confined in clay like
Harut and Marut in the pit of Babylon.**

Harut and Marut, pure ones, tasted it—
They were confined in the most frightful pit.
The base and lustful world—they're locked within
This horrible pit on account of sin.
The good and evil both learn sorcery
From this well-known pair inadvertently,
But first they counsel: each will say, 'Beware

Don't learn from us this sorcery you find rare.
 We teach this sorcery for a trial. That's all. 625
 Just for a test—it's not that wonderful.'
 Testing requires free will—that is a fact;
 You can't have free will with no power to act.
 Desires are like the sleeping dogs you've spied:
 Both good and evil can be found inside—
 They stay asleep when there's no power to act,
 Silent like logs in fire, all neatly stacked,
 Until a corpse should make them look around—
 Greed's trumpet startles them with its rude sound.
 When there's a donkey's carcass in the lane 630
 A hundred dogs will then wake up again.
 The dormant lusts that are concealed from view
 Will hurry then to rear their heads up too.
 On each dog every hair becomes a tooth
 And they will wag their tails to hide the truth:
 Its rear's a trick; anger fills up its head
 Like tinder added to flames seeming dead.
 Flame after flame comes from No-Place—your eye
 Will see the flame's smoke rise up in the sky.
 A hundred such dogs lurk within us—they 635
 Are hidden from us when there is no prey.
 Like hooded falcons with their eyes sealed up,
 Behind veils love for prey still fills them up
 Until the hood is lifted and they see
 The prey, then circle mountains instantly.
 The sick man's lusts are pacified, for then
 His thoughts are fixed on getting well again—
 Once he sees foods like melon, bread, and apple,
 His fear of harm and relish start a battle:
 If he has self-restraint, then seeing food 640
 Will help, since in his sick state this does good;
 But if he has none, then it's clearly smarter—
 Arrows stay far from men who have no armour.

The answer of the peacock to the one asking it questions.

Once it stopped crying, then the peacock said:

'Begone! You are a slave to looks! Instead
Can't you see that so many awful things
Come to me from all sides due to my wings?
There are so many hunters everywhere
Who see my feathers then put down a snare.
So many archers aim from far away
With arrows due to my wings' fine display.
Since I don't have the strength or self-restraint
To cope with trials and hardship like a saint,
It's better to be ugly now for me
And in the mountains find security.
These wings are weapons of my pride, my friend—
A hundred sufferings are what pride will send.'

645

*Explanation of how skills, cleverness, and worldly wealth are, like
the peacock's feathers, enemies of the soul.*

Skills are the bane of men who're unaware—
They want the bait and fail to see the snare.
Free will is good for that one who's a seeker
And with '*Fear God!*' is clearly his own leader.
If you lack self-control and piety
Put down your tools and don't act like you're free.
'My feathers are free will and self-display—
They seek my end, so I'll tear them away.
The patient man deems feathers worthless, so
They won't tempt him into wrongdoing's woe,
So feathers won't harm him—he need not tear
Them out; his shield blocks arrows in the air.
But beautiful feathers are for me a foe,
Since I am prone to self-display, I know.
If self-restraint and patience led me straighter,
Through free will, my self-battling would be greater.
I'm like a child or drunkard near temptation;
It's wrong to hold a sword in my low station.
With self-restraint and wisdom, then a sword
In my hand would win all across the board.
One needs the sun-like wisdom that gives light
To strike with swords and always get it right.

650

655

I lack that radiant wisdom; I'm unfit— 660
 I should just throw my weapons down a pit.
 Right now my sword and shield are what I'll throw
 In there, since they'll be weapons for my foe.
 Since I lack strength, support, and company,
 My foe will seize my sword and slash at me.
 To spite this brazen, unveiled self, I vow
 To scratch on purpose my own face right now,
 To thus reduce the beauty that's on show—
 Without my face shown I will meet less woe.
 When I do it with this aim there's no sin, 665
 For wounds should cover this fine face's skin.
 If my heart's nature was meek modesty
 My handsome face would spread just purity.
 I didn't see strength, soundness and past lessons—
 I saw my foe and smashed up all my weapons,
 So that my sword would not add to his arms,
 And my own dagger cause me many harms.
 As long as my veins throb, I'll choose to flee—
 Fleeing oneself does not come easily.
 One who flees someone else can feel secure 670
 Once he gets far from him—he can feel sure—
 But my foe is my self and my sad plight
 Is running constantly with no respite!
 In India and Khotan no sanctuary
 When your own shadow is your enemy!

Description of the selfless ones who have become safe from their own vices and virtues, which are transient, through the permanence of God, just like the stars that are annihilated during the day by the sunshine—the one who is annihilated has no fear of harm or danger.

One will be, like the Prophet, shadowless
 When one's own selflessness embellishes.
 'Poverty is my pride'* was this way graced—
 Like candle flames his shadow was effaced:
 The candle is aflame then totally; 675
 No shadow of it forms that one can see—
 Wax flees from self and shadow into light,

Which, for His sake, the candle brings to sight.
'I poured light to efface you now,' God said,
Men said, 'To that effacement I then fled'—
These are the necessary, lasting rays,
Not those of candles that last just for days.
The candle is effaced in fire in full;
No trace of light or candle's visible.
Through its dispelling darkness it is clear 680
That wax is what maintains the fire's form here.
The body's candle's not like wax at all,
For when it weakens there's more light of soul—
With rays that last and aren't for just one night
The candle of the soul has holy light.

Due to the fact this flame was really light
It cast no shadow as it burned so bright.
A cloud will cast its shadow on the ground,
But there's no shadow of the moon around.
Good man, selflessness is like cloudlessness, 685
Be like the moon's disc in your selflessness—
When clouds are driven over it, we see
Its light goes; all that's left is memory:
Its light is weakened by the cloud's veil—soon
The full moon is much less than a new moon.
Clouds make the moon a fleeting memory;
The body's cloud makes things illusory.
And the moon's beauty? It's His beauty too.
'Clouds are our enemies,' He said to you.
The moon is free from dust and clouds—it's clear 690
She has a heavenly orbit far from here.
The cloud is our foe since it always tries
To hide the lovely moon's face from our eyes.
This veil makes houris look like hags to you
And the full moon less than a new moon too.
The moon seats us on glory's lap, and she
Has called our bitter foe her enemy.
The beauty of the cloud comes from the moon,
But don't err, calling clouds 'the moon' too soon.

The moon's light's shining on the cloud—it seems 695
 No longer dark, transformed thus by moon beams.
 Though it has the moon's colour it is known
 That colour is just on a temporary loan.
 Sun and moon are themselves redundant when
 The Source of Light preoccupies all men—
 So they know borrowed things are transient
 And tell this world from what is permanent.
 Mother, the nurse is only temporary—
 Embrace us in your breast immediately!

'My feathers are the cloud and veil: unclean. 700
 Through God's own beauty they have all turned clean.
 I'll tear my feathers out, so I can soon
 Distinguish the moon's beauty from the moon.'
 I don't want nurses—better to have mother.
 Like Moses's, my nurse now is none other.
 I don't want go-betweens before the moon;
 It causes people's ruin to come soon,
 Unless a cloud's effaced while on the way,
 So it can't veil the moon's fine face today.
 Being naught itself, it shows her form so clearly 705
 Like Prophets and God's Friends before God really.
 A cloud like that won't form a veil, but it
 Rather will tear veils to give benefit,
 As when on sunny mornings drops descend
 Without a cloud above at all, my friend.
 That was the Prophet's miracle—effacement
 Made clouds transparent to all men's amazement:
 Clouds lost their own cloud nature in their view;
 Through patience lovers' bodies do so too.
 A body right here, but its bodyness 710
 Transformed without scent's trace and colourless.

'Feathers please others while my brain's much greater,
 Hearing and vision's home, my body's aider.'
 To sell one's spirit to trap others is

Unbelief and denial of godliness.
Don't be like sugar cubes for parrots—never!
Be poison, safe from loss thus altogether.
Don't be a carcass for the dogs, just so
You get some flattering praise for such a show.
Khezz broke the boat just so that he could spare it, 715
So the usurper wouldn't confiscate it.*
'Poverty is my pride'* so please take heed
To flee the greedy for *One Without Need*.
Hiding treasures in ruins is to spare
It from the greedy who won't seek it there.
If you can't tear your feathers off your wings,
Choose retreat and don't be consumed by things,
For you're both morsel and a morsel-eater,
Consumer and consumed—take heed, it's clearer!

Explaining that everything other than God is eating and being eaten, like the bird that was hunting locusts and so preoccupied with this that it was unaware of the hungry falcon breathing down its neck trying to catch it. Now, O hunting and eating human, do not feel secure against the one who hunts and eats you even though you can't see Him with your eyes' vision but only with the vision of the proofs and their contemplation until your real eyes open, if God wills.

A little bird was hunting worms one day, 720
A cat then grabbed it as it passed its way.
Eater and eaten, it was unaware
While hunting worms its hunter, too, lurked there.
If a thief is pursuing something then
Police chiefs chase him, as do other men.
His brain's fixed on the door's lock and the loot
Heedless of the police chief in pursuit—
Absorbed with his own craving, he can't hear
People pursuing him now drawing near.
Grass feeds on air and water, but is later 725
Chewed up and fills the stomach of a grazer—
That grass is eating and being eaten too;
Apart from God, for all the same is true.

‘*God feeds you, yet is not fed*’* is well known,
 Neither eater nor food, nor flesh and bone.
 An eater who gets eaten cannot be
 Safe from devourers lurking dangerously.
 You’ll see the eater’s not safe once he’s dead—
 Go to the court of *that One who’s not fed*!*
 Imaginings each devour another one; 730
 Each thought’s devoured too by a different one.
 You can’t flee from imaginings and you’ll see
 That simply sleeping cannot help you flee:
 Your sleep’s like water; thought is like a bee—
 Once you awake thoughts come back instantly.
 Imaginings’ bees will buzz right in and they
 Will start to pull you this way then that way.
 These are the smallest of devourers really;
 God, the Most Glorious, knows the others clearly.
 Flee from the rough devourers now with speed 735
 To Him who said: ‘I am your guard’—take heed!
 Or to one who has such protection when
 You can’t reach fast enough the Guard of men.
 Submit to the true master in this land
 And no one else—God guards Himself his hand.
 Your intellect’s a child and masters you,
 For it is mixed with the veiled ego too.
 Join the Whole Intellect of the Creator
 So wisdom comes to you from your bad nature.
 Once you place your own hand in His hand, you 740
 Will then escape devourers of men too.
 Your hand will join the ones who’ve pledged good man—
 ‘*God’s hand’s above their hands*’ says the Qur’an—*
 Once you give to the Master your hand, he
 Who has all wisdom one could possibly,
 Who is the Prophet of his time, no doubt,
 Such that the Prophet’s light through him shines out.
 You’ll be in Hodaybiyya* as a member
 Of that group who pledged there, if you remember:
 You’ll be among the ten whose fates were told;* 745
 You’ll be transformed as pure as purest gold,
 So your association’s right, not wrong;

With those we love is where we all belong—
 He is with him in this world and the next:
 This is the meaning of the sacred text:
 ‘*A man is with the one he loves—the heart*
And its desired one won’t be kept apart.’*
 Don’t rest, materialist, near snare and bait—
 Look at all the materialists’ sad fate!
 You who deem others weak must understand 750
 That far above yours there’s a higher hand.
 You’re weak yet prey upon the weak all day—
 How strange that you’re both hunter and the prey!
 You have *a barrier both front and behind**
 So you can’t see your foe as though you’re blind.
 Greedy with hunting, you forget you’re prone;
 You try to win hearts though you’ve lost your own.
 Don’t be less than a bird in seeking bread:
 A sparrow sees *what’s back and what’s ahead**—
 The moment it approaches just one grain 755
 It looks behind and straight ahead again:
 ‘Is there a hunter here, such that I should
 Be careful and abstain now from the food?’
 Remember now the wicked people’s fates;
 See the death of your neighbours, which awaits.
 Without the need for instrument, it’s clear
 He can cause death; He’s always with you here.
 He tortures without weapons—understand
 God deals out justice without use of hand.
 The one who asked, ‘If God exists, then where?’ 760
 Confessed while tortured He existed there.
 He who said, ‘That’s far-fetched and weird!’ in fear
 Now sheds tears and cries out, ‘You who are near!’
 While he now sees that he must flee the snare
 You’re trapped due to your feathers, unaware.
 I’ll pull this wretched snare’s nail out; I must
 Make sure not to lose out just due to lust.
 I’ve answered fittingly for your brain’s scope.
 Take heed of this: keep searching, don’t lose hope!
 Sever envy and greed’s cord—comprehend 765
 ‘*A cord of branches on her neck,*’* my friend!

The reason why Abraham killed the crow, which was a representation of the subjugation of some of the blameworthy and destructive qualities of the disciple.*

This topic's endless. I now want to know,
 Abraham, why did you then kill the crow?
 What was the point? For a divine command?
 Reveal a little so I understand!
 The squawking of that black crow always seeks
 More life in this world, pleading as it speaks,
 Like Satan, who had begged the One and Holy
 To grant eternal life for bodies only:
 'Grant me respite till Judgment Day!'^{*} he said— 770
 If only he'd said: 'I repent!' instead.
 Without repentance life is torment. Severance
 From God implies that you are in death's presence.
 With God both life and death are sweet; without
 Water of Life is fire none can put out.
 It's Satan's curse that in God's presence he
 Asked for life to go on eternally.
 To ask God for what's other than Him is
 To seek gain but to lose by doing this,
 Long life apart from Him especially— 775
 A loser fox near lion-like royalty
 Would ask, 'Prolong my life so I get worse;
 More time for me to lose worth for the curse',
 As if he is deserving of it—people
 Like that who seek out curses are plain evil.
 Nurturing the soul is what makes life worthwhile;
 The crow's life's eating up shit all the while:
 'Give me more life so I can eat more shit!
 Inside I'm evil—keep on giving it!'
 If that foul-mouthed one didn't eat shit later 780
 He would beg, 'Save me from my vile crow nature!'

Prayer

You have transmuted clay to gold, and You
 Made Adam, Mankind's father, from clay too—

Your work's transmuting essences, bestowing;
My work is erring, blundering, and not knowing.
Transform to knowledge my forgetfulness!
I'm angry—give me patient gentleness!
You who make soil transform to wholesome bread
And then make life from what's inert and dead.
You who make stunned souls leaders, and O You 785
Who can make prophets from mere wanderers too,
You make a piece of earth the heavens, You
Influence through the stars the earth's course too.
One who for Water of Life takes this world here
Will meet death sooner than the rest, it's clear.
The heaven-gazing inner eye could see
That every second here there's alchemy:
Your body's cloak is joined up seamlessly—
Transmuting essences is alchemy.
You were air, fire, or earth from that first day 790
That you came to exist here in some way.
If you'd remained like that, then how could all
This loftiness have come to you at all?
It's thanks to the Transmuter and His grace
Better ones came to take the last one's place;
For millions of existents thus, in turn,
Their second's better than their previous one.
See it from the Transmuter, not the means—
You'll stray from Him by seeing go-betweens:
As go-betweens grew, union went from view; 795
As they decreased, then union's savour grew.
Knowing causes lessens perplexity;
The latter leads to His proximity.

Why turn away from dying in Him when
From such death you gained living on again—
What loss came to you from your death like that
Which makes you cling to life like a mere rat?
Your second's better than your first, so you
Should seek the Changer and effacement too!
You have seen resurrections by the million 800

From your birth till today you stubborn minion!
 Inert, then growing plant-like for a while,
 From that plant state to full life with its trial,
 To wisdom then and visions that make clear,
 Further to what's beyond dimensions here.
 These footprints reach up to the ocean's shore,
 But once inside the footprints are no more:
 Dry stations are designed for cautiousness
 Whether they're cities, forts, or villages,
 But stations in the ocean have no floor 805
 Or roof while waves confine you from the shore.
 There are no signs at all for such a station.
 No name, address, nor any indication.
 Between two stations there the distance is
 More than that from a plant to spirit is.
 In prior deaths you saw those lives before,
 So why cling to your body's life some more?
 Give up this life, crow—be instead a falcon!
 Gamble away all for God's transmutation!
 Give up the old and take the new with glee, 810
 For each new year's worth more than the past three.
 If you're not like the palm that gives fresh dates,
 Just pile the old up and forget their states—
 Deliver to the blind men now instead
 This rotten, stinking world that's virtually dead.
 Someone who's seen the new won't take from you—
 He is God's prey; he's not your captive too.
 Wherever one finds those birds that are blind
 They're near you, water of the brackish kind:
 Their blindness is increased by drinking you, 815
 For brackish water worsens blindness too.
 Thus, worldly men are blind of heart today;
 They drink the brackish water found in clay.
 Give briny water! Bury blind ones here,
 Since you lack Water of Life it is clear.
 You'll stay and be remembered in this way,
 Unashamed like the black-faced slaves today:
 The African's content with blackness—he
 Should be since he was black originally,

But if one had been fair a previous day
Then turned black, he'd try wiping it away.
When a bird's left behind on low terrain
It feels much sorrow and it suffers pain,
But birds that can't fly are quite happy there,
Feeding on grain, as if without a care,
For they could never fly originally
Unlike the birds that flew instinctively.

*The Prophet said: 'Pity three types of men: the great man belonging
to a debased people, the rich man of a poor community, and a
learned man whom the ignorant make a fool of.'*

'Take pity on the soul,' the Prophet said
'Of those once rich who now are poor instead,
And those brought low who had been venerated,
And learned men with the uneducated.'
The Prophet said, 'Show pity to these three
Even if you're as cold as men can be:
The former leader who is powerless,
The one once rich who now is penniless,
And then the scholar whose sad suffering here
Among the stupid people is severe.'
Falling from greatness to a nobody
Is cutting limbs from bodies tragically:
The freshly chopped off limb so quickly dies
Even if it should move before your eyes.
Whoever's downed *Alast's* cup last year will
Be still hungover this year and feel ill,
While he, who dog-like loves the kennel here—
This base world—can't seek greatness that is dear.
Repentance is what those who sinned will pray—
Why should one sigh unless they've lost their way?

*Story about the deer fawn becoming confined in the donkey stable
and how the donkeys attacked that stranger, first with fighting
then with mockery, and how it suffered having to eat straw, which is
not its food. This is a description of the elite servant of God among
the worldly and lustful, for the Messenger of God said,
'Islam appeared as a stranger and will return to being
a stranger—blessed are the strangers!'*

A hunter caught a deer fawn on a hunt
And put it in a stable, negligent;
Just like a tyrant he kept it confined 835
With cows and donkeys there, not its own kind.
The fawn ran aimlessly in utter fright.
He brought straw for the donkeys too that night.
Each cow and donkey ate it with much haste
As if that straw were sugary in taste.
The fawn would rush this way and then that way,
Then, worried by the straw, it turned away.
If left behind with those who're different
One deems that like a deadly punishment.
Solomon said, 'If that hoopoe won't say 840
A good excuse for its now being away,
I'll kill it or give torment that's so full
It is a torment that's immeasurable.'
What is that torment? Being caged alone
With people very different to your own.
Due to the body, pain afflicts Mankind—
Your spirit's bird's caged with a different kind,
A falcon with the crows surrounding it—
The crows and owls are always wounding it;
In misery stuck there, it's similar 845
To a rare Abu Bakr in Sabzevar.*

Story about Mohammad Khwarazmshah, who conquered
the city of Sabzevar, which was entirely Shi'ite. They begged
to be spared, to which he responded: 'I'll grant you safety
when you present to me a man from this city
called "Abu Bakr".'*

Mohammad Alp Ologh Khwarazmshah

Arrived for battle once at Sabzevar.
His forces cornered its defenders and
As they began to slay those on that land
The latter fell prostrate: 'Will you not give
The chance to slave for you if we can live?
Whatever tax and tribute you demand
We'll give without fail on the days you've planned.
O lion-like Shah, we earnestly implore: 850
Our lives are yours—let us live on some more!
He said, 'You won't be spared by me again
Without an "Abu Bakr" among your men—
Bring me an "Abu Bakr" now from this city,
O deviant ones, if you desire my pity;
Or else I'll mow you down, you wretched folk—
No tributes or excuses! It's no joke.'
They brought so many sacks of gold instead:
'Don't seek an "Abu Bakr", please!' they said.
'In Sabzevar how can one have that name? 855
Finding dry bricks in streams would be the same!
He turned away from all the gold to say:
'Infidels, if you can't bring him today
There's no point bringing gifts. I am too old
To be beguiled by silver and by gold.'
Unless you touch your forehead on the ground
You can't soar, though your butt sits all around!
They sent men searching everywhere: they'd race
Seeking out 'Abu Bakr's' near that place.
After three days of rushing all around 860
A skinny man called Abu Bakr was found.
He had been travelling through, but then felt poorly
So, almost dead, he stayed to get well fully,
Lying down in a quiet nook—their eyes
Lit up on seeing him: they said, 'Arise!
The Sultan has demanded you from us,
To make his mind up not to slaughter us.'
'If I could move myself,' the sick man said,
'I would have left here long ago instead—
Why stay here in the city of the foe; 865
I would have reached my friends' town long ago.'

They brought a cart so his complaints would stop
 And lifted Abu Bakr then on the top,
 Then took him to the Khwarazmshah at once
 So he could see himself the evidence.

Sabzevar stands for this world—mystics here
 Feel ruined by displacement which is clear.
 The Khwarazmshah stands here for God, the Glorious,
 Demanding heart from people who're notorious.
 'He looks not at your forms,' the Prophet said, 870
 'So seek the owner of a heart instead':

God said, 'I watch you through the man with heart,
 Not prayer or alms since they're the lower part.
 You thought your own heart could fulfil that too
 And stopped your search for those whose heart is true,
 The heart where seven hundred heavens might
 Get covered and stay hidden there from sight—
 Don't call your fragments 'hearts', nor claim there are
 People called 'Abu Bakr' from Sabzevar.

The mystic is a six-faced mirror so 875
 God sees through him all six sides one can know;
 God only watches through his mediation
 All in the six dimensions from His station:
 If God rejects, He does it for him and
 If He accepts, he's why—please understand
 Without him God won't give to anyone;
 Of this man's virtues this is only one.
 God puts the gift on the palm of his hand—
 From there it reaches others in the land.
 His hand's link with the Absolute's great sea: 880
 Perfect, beyond all doubts, uncertainty.

It is a link beyond all words as well;
 One cannot speak about it, so farewell!

If you bring Him a hundred sacks of gold,
 'Bring me an actual heart!' you'll then be told.
 'If that heart's pleased with you, then I am too,

But I'm displeased if it's displeased with you:
 I don't look at you, but that heart that's whole—
 Bring to my door a gift for that, O soul!
 How does that heart view you? My view's none other— 885
 Heaven's beneath the feet of each one's mother.*
 It's mother, father, and the source as well
 Of all creation—tell heart from the shell!
 You'll say, 'I've brought a heart to you today.'
 'All towns are full of such hearts,' God will say,
 'Bring one that has the *axis mundi* role,
 The true soul of the soul of Adam's soul.'
 The Sultan of all hearts awaits that one
 That's filled with light and goodness. Bring that! Run!
 You roam around in Sabzevar all day, 890
 But you won't find it searching in this way—
 All you are doing is placing on the bier
 A bent and rotten heart to carry here,
 Claiming 'I've brought a heart here from afar
 For you—it is the best from Sabzevar.'
 He'll say, 'Is this a graveyard that you bring
 A dead heart brazenly for such a king!
 Go back, bring one with a king's character;
 Through that comes safety to Being's Sabzevar.'
 You could say that heart's hidden, isn't it? 895
 Darkness in this world is light's opposite,
 And its dislike since Pre-Eternity
 For sensual Sabzevar's hereditary.
 The heart's a falcon and this world's a crow—
 It's hard being trapped with strangers you don't know.
 If they act amiably, they just pretend,
 Seeking self-gain through acting like a friend.
 Without desire they do it to deceive,
 Reducing good advice you should receive,
 Because this carrion-seeking crow is vile 900
 And has a million tricks to use with guile.
 If falseness is accepted, he's set free—
 It's changed to seekers' true sincerity
 Since those possessing heart, the men of God,
 Shop in the market-place for what is flawed.

Seek them if you are not a soulless person,
 Be the heart's sort, if not foes with the sultan!
 But you like those men who will flatter you
 With falseness, not God's Friends whose words are true.
 Whoever fits your nature and condition 905
 Seems prophet-like to your corrupted vision.
 Abandon lust so fine scent reaches you
 And that scent-seeking organ finds you too—
 Lusts have corrupted your own sense of smell:
 Amber and musk seem things that one can't sell.
 This discourse has no limit and that fawn
 Is charging in the stable—let's move on!

*The remainder of the story about the deer fawn
 and the donkey-stable.*

That lovely fawn endured for several days
 Inside the donkey-stable torture's ways
 Like fish on dry land, wriggling desperately, 910
 Or musk mixed with dung inadvertently.
 One donkey said, 'This wild one's in a rush
 Believing that it's royalty, so hush!'

Another mocked, 'Through charging it has found
 A pearl it won't sell cheaply in the ground.'
 Another: 'It's so dainty I condone
 That it recline now on the royal throne.'
 Another donkey fell ill overeating
 And so invited that sweet fawn for feeding:

It shook its head, 'No, let me be tonight. 915
 I'm feeling weak and have no appetite.'
 'You're playing hard to get!' the donkey said,
 'Or it's for reputation's sake instead?'

The fawn said to itself, 'That is your food
 Through which your limbs gain strength and you feel good.
 I'm more familiar with fine lawns than here,
 Resting in parks where waters all run clear.
 Though I now suffer due to destiny,
 How can I ever lose my dignity?
 A beggar, but I won't be shameless too. 920

Although my clothes are old my spirit's new.
 I've eaten basil, hyacinths, and tulips
 With much disdain shown through my eyes and full lips.'
 'Keep bragging then, for we all understand
 It's easy to when in a foreign land.'
 'My musk is proof: amber and aloes wood
 Owe debts to it—its perfume is so good.
 Only those who can smell will sense this now;
 It's not for donkeys who love shit somehow.
 Donkeys like donkey urine's roadside smell—
 Why should I give my musk to them as well?'

925

The Prophet said, '*Islam is marked to be
 A stranger in this world,*' and we can see
 Even his followers fled from him though
 Angels share in his essence. Men below
 Notice his face looks like their own, but they
 Can't smell that scent in him in any way.
 A lion's in a cow's shape in the distance,
 But you don't look more closely in this instance.
 If you do, you will quit your body's cow—
 That lion ravages it anyhow.
 He'll throw that cow out of your head, thus he
 Removes from animal animality.
 If cow-like, through him you'll become a lion.
 Content as cow? Then don't seek being a lion.

930

*Exegesis of 'I saw seven fat cows which seven thin cows ate up.'**
 God created those thin cows with the traits of hungry lions,
 so they would devour the seven fat ones. Although those
 images of the forms of these cows were shown in the
 mirror of dreams, perceive the actual meaning!

Once Egypt's ruler dreamt the following
 When his interior eye was opening:
 Seven fat cows that looked to be well-fed
 Devoured by seven skinny cows instead.

The skinny cows were lions inwardly 935
 To eat the fatter cows so easily.
 The great man looks like other men outside—
 A lion who eats men is found inside:
 He eats the other man, and helps him gain:
 Detached, his dregs become pure through this pain:
 He spares that man of dregs through pain, so he
 Can step above the lofty stars you see.
 For how long like a vile crow will you cry:
 ‘Why kill the rooster, Abraham, say why?’*
 He answered you, ‘Divine command compelled me.’ 940
 So we can praise it, detail it completely!

Explaining that the killing of the rooster by Abraham signifies the suppression and subduing of certain blameworthy and destructive qualities within the disciple.

The rooster is so lustful it’s addicted,
 Drunk on that poisonous, vile wine, and conflicted.
 Had it not been because of procreation
 Adam, through shame, would have preferred castration.
 Accursed Satan said to God one day:
 ‘I want a powerful snare for human prey.’
 God showed him silver, gold, and horses then:
 ‘Through these you’ll easily entice all men.’
 Satan said, ‘Excellent!’ but dropped his head 945
 And turned as sour as lemons are instead,
 Then God gave that downhearted Satan gold
 And jewels from His mines. Satan was told:
 ‘Take this snare too, accursed one.’ He said:
 ‘Give me more You who’re best at giving aid!’
 God gave him greasy sweetmeats that were rare,
 Exotic drinks and silken robes to wear.
 Satan then said, ‘I need more help, O Lord,
 To tie them up with a *palm-fibre cord*,*
 So drunken lovers who are brave and strong 950
 Can manfully break it to prove they belong
 With You, and thus stay separate from the rest
 By means of this snare’s cords of lust as test.

O Sultan of the Throne, I want a snare
That's trickier, to bring them down from there,
And so God brought him wine and harp, then he
Half-smiled—he was more pleased than previously.
He sent God's power to mislead this: 'Start motion,
Raise dust up from the depths of tempting's ocean!
Was Moses not one of your servants who 955
With dust once parted waves all thanks to you?
Water drew back from all sides suddenly;
Dust shot up from the bottom of the sea.'
Once God showed him a woman's beauty then,
Since it was more than self-restraint of men,
Satan then snapped his fingers and began
A jig: 'That's it! As quickly as you can!
When Satan saw her tempting eyes, both able
To make men's reason and restraint unstable,
The radiance of that beauty's face that could 960
Make men's hearts burn like rue and aloes wood,
Cornelian lips, arched brow, and beauty spot,
God shone there through a veil or so he thought:
Satan saw her light gait, her flirts, and posture
As God through a thin veil in self-disclosure.

*Exegesis of 'We created Man in the best of positions, then we
reduced him to the lowest of the lows'* and exegesis of
'Whomsoever we grant a long life we make him
regress in creation.'**

Beauty to which the angels had bowed down
Was taken off as Adam was sent down:
'After my being, non-being?' he said that time.
God answered, 'Living too long was your crime.'
Gabriel said, while dragging by his hair, 965
'Begone from paradise and from the fair.'
'First glory, now abasement—tell me why?'
'A gift at first, then judgment,' the reply.
'O Gabriel, wholeheartedly you'd bow,
So how can you drive me from heaven now?
My robes of honour fall now, as you see,

Like leaves in autumn falling from the tree.
 That face that is as radiant as the moon
 Ages just like a lizard's back so soon.
 That forehead that is beaming soon gets old
 And then it looks so hideous and bald.
 That proud, tall stature, lethal as a spear,
 Becomes bent-double as old age comes near.
 The tulip's red turns to the saffron's yellow.
 Lion-like strength is feeble soon, my fellow.
 The one who'd wrestle rivals down will hold
 Onto their arms so he can stand, once old.
 These are the signs of pain, and of decay,
 Each bringing messages from death today.

970

*Exegesis of 'The lowest of the low, except those who believed
 and did good things, for they shall have a reward without
 remaining indebted.'**

If one's physician is God's Light, however,
 Fevers and old age cannot harm one ever.
 Weakness there is like drunkards' weakness—he
 Ignites through weakness Rostam's jealousy.
 If he dies, his bones soak in savour, learning;
 His atoms float in rays of light and yearning.
 Those lacking this are orchards lacking fruit,
 Which autumn will turn over and uproot.
 Roses don't last; only the black thorns stay.
 Roses turn flat and yellow just like hay.
 O God, what did the orchard once commit
 For all its fine robes to be stripped from it?
 'It saw itself and that's a poisonous vial—
 Beware, those of you who are now on trial!
 Young beauties who made lovers weep one time
 Repulse the whole world now—what was their crime?
 'Their crime was wearing robes that were on loan
 And claiming that those fine robes were their own.
 We take them back so you will know for sure
 The stack is ours—its scraps go to the pure;
 So each knows that the robe was just on loan,

975

980

985

From Being's Sun a single ray alone.
 That beauty, power, grace, and virtue too,
 Came here from Beauty's Sun for all to view.
 The light of that sun, which is very far,
 Turns back from these walls homewards like a star.
 Once it has finally managed to get back
 The walls will lose their light and then look black.
 What stunned you in the faces of the fair
 Is the sun's light through coloured glass brought there.
 The multicoloured glass displays that light 990
 As being multicoloured to our sight,
 But when that lens is not here to view through
 The colourless light then will dazzle you.
 Get used to viewing with no lens that light
 So when the lens breaks you won't lose your sight.
 For you, book-knowledge easily satisfies—
 Through someone else's lamp you've lit your eyes.
 He'll take away the lamp so you can know
 You are a borrower and can't bestow.
 If you have tried and given thanks, don't fret— 995
 He'll give a hundredfold back to you yet.
 Weep blood now though, if you have not been grateful,
 Because that Beauty's rid of the ungrateful.
He makes the works of the ingrates go missing.
*He leaves the righteous ones' state's worth increasing.**
 Goodness is lost to all ungrateful men—
 They will not see a trace of that again.
 Gratitude, selflessness, and kind affection—
 All vanish such that there's no recollection.
 Ingrates, '*He led their deeds to loss*',* alluding 1000
 To each sought-out goal's flight when they're pursuing.
 The grateful, loyal ones are the exception—
 Awaiting them is a most grand reception.
 Lost fortune can't give strength now. How could it?
 Future fortune gives special benefit:
 Lend now some of your fortune—God said, '*Lend!*'*
 You'll see a hundredfold thus in the end.
 Reduce what you consume, for your own gain,
 For Kawsar's pool is what you can attain.

How can the captured prey of fortune flee 1005
 One who pours draughts of true fidelity?
 God gladdens them: '*He makes good their condition*,'*
 And He returns to them what they had given:
 God says, 'Fate, raiding Turk, give back again
 What you have plundered from those thankful men!'

It does, but they won't take it anyhow,
 Since these men have acquired the soul's wares now:
 'We're Sufis and have thrown our cloaks,' they say,
 'We don't take what we gambled once away.
 We've seen God's recompense and do not fear. 1010
 Desire and need have left us, it is clear.
 We have emerged from filthy, poisonous brine
 To reach Kawsar and all the heavenly wine.
 O world, for what you've done with others there—
 Disloyalty, disdain, schemes you prepare—
 We in revenge pour back on you. That's right:
 We're martyrs but we have returned to fight,
 So you should know that God has servants who
 Are combative and will confront foes too:
 They rip the moustache of hypocrisy 1015
 And pitch their tents on forts of victory.'

These martyrs have become combative men;
 These captives have gained victory again.
 From Non-existence each raised back his head:
 'Watch us if you're not blind!' these men have said,
 To show suns in Non-being beyond compare
 And teach that suns here are mere stars in there.
 Existence found in Non-existence—how?
 Things hidden in their opposites somehow?
 God said, '*He brings the living from the dead*.'* 1020
 His slaves hope for Non-being now instead:
 Doesn't the sower with an empty store
 Put all his hopes on Non-being to bring more,
 That from Non-being new crops grow on his land?
 If you have vision you will understand.
 You wait for understanding from Non-being

And peace and savour that you're also needing.
Sharing this secret's not permitted here
Or I'd turn Abkhaz to Baghdad, my dear!*

Thus Non-existence is God's treasury
From which He brings out gifts continually.
He's the Originator, and in short
Creates a branch without root or support.

1025

*Parable about the Existing World that appears non-existent
and the non-existent world that appears to exist.*

God made non-being appear to be, and He
Made Being seem non-existent similarly.
He hid the sea, but brought the foam to view;
He hid the wind, but showed the dust to you.
Dust, like a minaret, seems to your eyes
To move itself up, but how can it rise?
You see the raised dust, not the wind—you just
Deduce the wind's the mover of the dust.
You see the ocean's foam in constant motion,
But it can't move at all without the ocean.
Your eyes perceive just foam, the sea you still
Deduce: Thought's hidden, talk's perceivable.
We deemed negation affirmation wrongly
With eyes that saw the non-existents only.
How can eyes that emerged in slumber see
Other than non-existent fantasy?
We got confused because we were astray—
Truth was obscured, what's false made clear as day.
How did He make the non-existents seen
And hide Reality from sight so keen?
Well done, O Expert in such sorcery
Who made the dregs look pure so craftily!
Sorcerers measure moonbeams out to sell
To traders and earn gold this way so well:
They take cash through this very tricky magic
And traders pay cash but take home no fabric.
This world's the sorcerer; we're each a trader
Buying its measured moonbeams, learning later.

1030

1035

1040

Like sorcerers it measures out a cut
 Made out of light from moonbeams, it claims, but
 Once it has seized your life's cash, that's no more:
 Your wallet's empty and your fabric store!
 You must say '*I take refuge, God, in you!*'*
 And cry, 'Save me from *witches*' knots please, too!*'

Sorcerers blow on knots, so help me please,
 O Saviour, from destruction! Grant release!
 Call also with the tongue of deeds, my people, 1045
 Because the tongue of mere talk is so feeble.

In this world you've three fellow-travellers,
 One loyal and the others treacherous.
 The last two are belongings and companions;
 The first one, which is faithful, is good actions.
 Wealth will not come with you outside its store;
 Companions reach your grave, not one step more,
 And when your final hour comes your companion
 Will say, expressing what his soul would have done:
 'I can't come with you any further now; 1050
 I'll linger by your grave though anyhow.'
 Deeds are faithful—make them your refuge room
 For they will come with you deep in your tomb.

Exegesis of the saying of the Prophet: 'You must have companions to be buried with, they being alive and you being buried with them when you are dead. If they are noble, they will be generous to you; if they are base, they will betray you. Those companions are your deeds, so make them as good as you can.'

The Prophet said, 'There is no friend for you
 More loyal on this path than deeds you do:
 If they are good, then they will stay forever;
 If bad, they'll be snakes in your tomb. Remember!
 Without a teacher from whom you can learn
 How can you do this path's work and thus earn?
 Even the paid job that is the most small 1055
 Requires a master's guidance first of all.

Knowledge came first and then the deeds you do
 So they bear fruit eventually for you.

*Seek help in gaining skills, O clever man,
 From noble, upright craftsmen if you can.
 Seek from the craftsman skills he knows so well,
 O brothers, seek the pearl within the shell!
 Be good to all advisers whom you see
 And seek their teaching with humility.*

A tanner may have threadbare rags as dress, 1060

But this won't make his talents any less.
 If ironsmiths wear ragged clothes, still they
 Don't lose their reputation in this way.
 So strip yourself of pride's clothes and then wear
 Humility's clothes when you're learning there.
 Learning a theory is through words men say;
 Learning a skill's through practice every day.
 You need a master for your spiritual aim—

Neither the tongue nor hand can do the same.
 Your soul learns from the soul of such a master, 1065
 Not from the theory textbooks or mere chatter.

And though the mystery be inside his heart
 The seeker won't perceive more than a part,
 But when He turns this heart to light, that day
 'Didn't we open up your breast?'* He'll say.

'We've given you expansion in your breast;
 We put there in your heart what is the best,
 Yet you are seeking it from others now—

When you're the milk's source why seek out a cow?
 There's a milk fount in you that's limitless— 1070

Why seek milk from the cow's urn nonetheless?
 O river you've a channel to the sea—

Why seek pond water? Don't act shamefully!
 For *didn't we open up?**—did you not get it?

Why seek it elsewhere still and beg to get it?
 Ponder the heart's expansion that's inside you
 So you won't hear God's '*Do you not see?*'* chide you.

*Exegesis of 'And He is with you.'**

A basket full of bread is on your head
 Yet you beg door to door for crusts instead.
 Look to your own! Be lightheaded no more! 1075
 Knock on the heart's door! Why try every door?
 You're knee-deep in the stream yet while you're there
 You seek from others water, unaware.
 Water's in front, behind and all around,
 But eyes have *barriers front and back**—none's found.
 The rider seeks a horse—he's riding one!
 He asks, 'Where can I find a horse, my son?'
 'Hey, isn't this a horse beneath you clearly?'
 'So have you seen a horse?' he asks quite weirdly!
 Desperate for something clearly in his view, 1080
 Unaware of that thing, of himself too.
 Desperate for water while inside it: though
 He's deep inside, he can't see currents flow,
 Like ocean pearls which ask, 'Where is the sea?'
 They're blocked by their own shell-like fantasy.
 Their asking 'Where?' becomes their veil from sight,
 Their cloud that blocks the morning sun's bright light.
 Their bad eye is what's blindfolding them all—
 Seeing it lifted just creates a wall.
 Their consciousness is now what plugs the ear— 1085
 Stay conscious of God if love-crazed, draw near!

*Exegesis of the saying of the Prophet: 'Whoever makes his concern
 just a single concern, God will relieve him of his other concerns.
 Whoever is distracted by his various concerns—God will not
 care in which valley He kills him.'*

You've split your consciousness in different ways.
 Those idle fancies are worth naught. None stays.
 When water's drawn by every bad thorn's root
 From your attention, how can it bear fruit?
 Cut off that rotten branch! Water instead
 The good branch, bring it back now from the dead!
 Right now they both are green, but see the end

When only one of them bears fruit, my friend!
 The orchard's water is for just that one— 1090
 Notice the difference! Farewell, I am done.
 Giving water to trees is clearly justice;
 Giving water to thorns is clear injustice.
 Justice means putting gifts in proper places,
 Not for all roots that draw them to their spaces.
 Injustice means to put in the wrong place—
 It's just a source of misery and disgrace.
 Give God's grace to the soul and intellect,
 Not carnal nature, which one should reject.
 Load on your body all the grief that's fruitless, 1095
 Not on your heart and soul—that would be clueless:
 That's putting loads on Jesus's sweet head
 While donkeys roam load-free in fields instead.
 It's wrong to put kohl on your ear, for you
 To give the heart's work to the body too.
 If you're of heart, be proud and don't just suffer!
 If body, eat the poison, not the sugar!
 Sugar's bad for the body, poison's good—
 It's better not to give the body food:
 The body's fuel for hell—you should reduce it; 1100
 If it grows more fuel, then you should uproot it.
 You'll be a *firewood carrier* otherwise
 Like Abu Lahab's wife,* whom all despise.
 Tell firewood from the Sidra* if you can
 Even though both are green right now, good man!
 The Sidra's from the seventh heaven's sphere;
 The firewood is from smoke and flames down here.
 Similar in form to senses they may be
 Because one's eyes perceive mistakenly,
 But they're not similar to the heart's eye's sight— 1105
 Approach the heart! Strive to, *though it be slight*.
 If you lack feet then move yourself a bit
 To see each big and little thing as fit.

*On the meaning of the verse 'If you head out on the path, the path
will be opened to you. If you become non-existent,
you will be made truly Existent.'**

Although Zolaikha shut doors everywhere
Joseph succeeded still to flee from there.
The door unlocked and then the way out gaped—
Since Joseph trusted God first, he escaped.
Although the world has no chink one can see,
Like Joseph we must all try desperately
Until the lock is opened and you view 1110
The gateway—Placelessness makes space for you.
Clever one, you came to the world one day,
But can you tell exactly by which way?
You once came from a certain place below—
Do you recall the path of your trip? No!
So just because you don't recall, don't say
There is no way out—there's a 'wayless' way:
In dreams you happily travel everywhere,
But do you know the path that gets you there?
Close your eyes and surrender, then you'll view 1115
Yourself inside a timeless place anew.
A hundred tempting eyes keep your eyes glued,
As blindfolds though, since they all just delude.
You stare wide-eyed for love of an admirer,
Hoping for leadership and to rise higher.
You see in dreams, too, your admirers' faces—
An evil owl sees only ruined places.
You always hope admirers will come crawling,
But you have naught to sell them—it's appalling!
If your heart had some spiritual food, you would 1120
Have been set free from purchasers for good.

Story about the person who claimed to be a Prophet. They asked him, 'What have you consumed to become so crazy and to talk absurdly?' He answered, 'Even if I had found anything to consume I wouldn't have become crazy nor spoken "absurdly", for whatever good words such men say to those who are unworthy to hear them results in them seeming to speak "absurdly", even if they were divinely commanded in that "absurd" speech.'

'I am a Prophet!' once this person claimed,
 'More excellent than all the Prophets named!'
The people dragged him to their king to say:
 'He claimed: "I am God's Prophet!" Make him pay!'
People surrounded him like locusts there:
 'What trickery! What a deceitful snare!
If you mean that you came from Non-being, we
 Are all then noble Prophets equally.
We came from there, each here a stranger too—
 What, pompous one, is special about you?'
'Did you not come as sleeping children do
 Clueless about the path and stations too,
Then passing them while drunken, drowsily,
 Unaware of this path's topography?
We passed alert and joyful through its stations
 From out beyond this world of limitations,
Having seen stations at their source—we say
 We are like expert guides who know the way.'
They told the king, 'Torture him so such men
 Will never dare to say these things again!'

1125

1130

The king saw he was thin and feeble, so
 He would die easily from just one blow:
'How can one strike or torture him?' he thought,
 'His body is like glass, so I will not.
Instead I'll nicely speak with him and say:
 "Why do you have to boast in this proud way?"
For roughness will not be successful here:

Softness alone lures snakes out and not fear.
 He made those gathered round him step away; 1135
 The king was kind; gentleness was his way.
 He sat the claimant down and asked him then:
 'Where is your home and refuge?' 'King of men,
 Firstly, from *The Abode of Peace* I came
 Travelling down to this *Abode of Blame*,*
 With no home nor companion now around—
 Do fish make their homes ever on dry ground?'
 The king then asked in jest, 'What did you eat
 For breakfast that you're like this when we meet?
 Are you still hungry or did you take something 1140
 To get so drunk and boastful when you're talking?'
 'How could I then claim Prophethood?' he said,
 'If I had eaten fresh or dried up bread?
 Claiming my Prophethood among this lot
 Is seeking blood from stone, from where there's naught.'
 No one seeks from a mountain heart or mind,
 Nor fathoming puzzles of the subtle kind.
 The mountain echoes everything you shout;
 It jeers one like the scoffers do, no doubt:
 Such men are far from what the Lord has said— 1145
 Don't hope to find life inside something dead!
 Bring messages of gold and women and
 They'll happily give up all their wealth and land
 On hearing: 'Someone calls you from a distance:
 She is in love with you. Hear her insistence!'
 But if you bring God's honey-sweet words here:
 'You who have pledged, approach God now! Come near!
 Choose sustenance, not this world of decay!
 Don't die here! There you permanently stay,'
 They'll seek your blood and will attempt to kill you 1150
 And not just to defend their faith and virtue.

*The reason for the enmity of ordinary people and their
distancing of themselves from the Friends of God who call
them to God and the Water of Life.*

Opting to cling to home and property,
God's message pains them; that's reality.
A donkey's wound has a rag stuck on it
And you're removing it now bit by bit.
Due to the pain the donkey will kick out.
The one who's kept far is most blessed, no doubt,
Especially when the rags are soaking wet
On numerous wounds. Take heed, avoid regret!
The rag is property, the wound desire; 1155
The wound is bigger when desire is higher.
Owls only live in ruins: they've not had
Any news of the cities like Baghdad,
But if a falcon glides near through the air
It will give news about its king back there—
A hundred foes will mock this royal bird,
Saying that its reports are all absurd:
'What has the falcon brought us?' they will say,
'It wants to brag with tales that lead astray.'
Such foes are those who're old and rotten too, 1160
Or else that breath would make what's old turn new:
It gives new life to the long dead—that's right—
And wisdom's crown, and it bestows faith's light.
Don't shun the pure bestower of the spirit,
For he will mount you on a fast steed—spur it!
Don't sever thoughts from the crown-giver who
Can loosen knots from the heart's depths for you!
Whom shall I tell? Is there one person near
Seeking the Water of Life who might now hear?
You flee love after once enduring shame— 1165
What do you know of love besides its name?
Love shows much haughty pride and sheer disdain—
For love you must endure all these to gain.
Since love is loyal it seeks loyal ones;
It disregards disloyal companions.

Man is a tree; the covenant* his root—

You must tend to the root so it bears fruit.

Corrupted covenants are rotten roots—

They will be cut off from all grace and fruits.

Although the date palm's branches may be green,

1170

With rotten roots no benefit is seen.

Yet with good roots but no leaves now, we'll see

A hundred leaves burst forth eventually.

Don't let their knowledge dupe you! Seek the covenant!

Mere husk is knowledge; kernels are the covenant.

*Explaining that when an evildoer becomes entrenched in his
evildoing and sees the effects of the fortune of the good people,
due to envy he becomes a devil and a preventer of good,
like Satan, because a burnt stack wants all the other
stacks to burn too: 'Have you not seen him who
forbids a worshipper when he wants
to perform the ritual prayer.'**

When you see loyal people doing well

You're envious like a devil stuck in hell.

Those with weak natures desperately pray long

That no one else's body should get strong.

If you do not want Satan's jealousy

1175

Stop all pretensions and seek loyalty.

If you lack loyalty don't speak a word,

For words are claims for 'I' and 'we' when heard.

If kept in, words enrich the kernel, so

In silence thus the inner soul will grow.

Words on the tongue spend from the kernel's gains,

So don't hope a full kernel still remains.

One who speaks little has great thoughts, but when

Talks shell grows thick the kernel shrinks small then.

And when the skin is thick the kernel's thin,

1180

But when the kernel's full it has thin skin—

Look at these nuts when they are ripe to know:

The walnut, almond, and pistachio.

One who rebels becomes like Satan, evil,

Because he envies fortunes of good people.

When you've been loyal to the covenant
God will be loyal. He's munificent.
But you have closed your eyes now, haven't you
Despite '*Remember me and I will you!*'*
Heed '*Keep My Covenant!*' so God replies: 1185
'I'll keep your covenant',* thus bind the ties.
But what is ours, O sad man? I have found
It's like a dry seed planted in the ground.
The ground will gain no splendour from this seed,
Nor the ground's owner riches, so take heed!
It just alludes: 'I need this and I know
From Non-Existence You sent it below.
I ate it and the seed proves my claim's true
So send us such a bounty, I beg You!
So stop this dry prayer, son, because instead 1190
The tree needs seeds to be more widely spread!
If you've no seeds, just prayer, God will decide
To give a date-palm, saying: '*Well, he tried*',
Like Mary, who had pains but not one seed—
God made the date-palm fruitful for her need,*
And due to that great lady's loyalty
God granted wishes to her generously.
God makes those who've been loyal better than
The other sorts of people here. He can
Make seas and mountains subject to them and 1195
All the four elements serve their command.
This is a favour and serves as a token,
So the deniers can tell, though it's not spoken.
The hidden miracles are not perceived;
Such miracles can't even be conceived—
They are what matter and they last forever,
Neither cut short and not rescinded ever.

Prayer

Giver of strength and solidarity,
Rescue people from instability!
Please make the soul, which is now hunched and drooping, 1200
Be upright in that work it should be doing.

Give patience, fill their scales pan with good traits.
 Free them from that sly one who fabricates!
 Free them from envy, Noble One, so they
 Won't turn into cursed demons in that way.
 Oh how the masses burn with jealousy
 Over mere transient lusts and property!
 Look at how kings lead armies yet they slay
 Their family due to envy's evil sway!
 Lovers of dirty harlots also would 1205
 Murder each other for them if they could.
 Read *Wis and Ramin, Khosraw and Shirin*—*
 In jealousy how foolish some have been.
 The lovers died and their beloveds too,
 So they and their love were worth naught. It's true.
 Holy is God who brings non-beings together
 In love and also sets them on each other.
 Envies emerge in fake hearts to this day—
 Being compels non-being in this way.
 When even such kindhearted co-wives aim 1210
 To ravage one another all the same,
 Imagine what the stonyhearted do
 In envy—try comparing from your view.
 If the law hadn't spellbound people gently
 All would have ripped their rivals up in envy.
 The law tries to deter their worst behaviour;
 It puts the devil in a glass container
 Of witnesses, proof, oath, and oath's rejection
 Until the demon goes into detention,
 Just like the balance, through which satisfaction 1215
 Of opposites is unified in action.
 Know that the law's like scales and measures, saving
 Enemies from their feuds and mutual hating.
 If there were no scales how then could one rival
 Escape disputes, suspecting fraud. They're vital.
 When such an ugly, faithless carcass can
 Cause enmity and envy in each man,
 How must it be for that felicity
 When men and jinn are moved by jealousy?
 Demons are envious of decaying things; 1220

They'll never stop their theft and waylayings.
 Humans who've cultivated disobedience,
 Through jealousy, themselves have turned to demons.
 Read on these devilish men in revelation,
 Their change to demons by God's transformation.*
 Know when the devil can't tempt men astray
 He seeks help from those God has changed this way:
 'You're on my team now. Help! How much I tried!
 You must help now that we're on the same side.'
 Then if they waylay anyone, both kinds 1225
 Of devils celebrate with joy, one finds.
 And if one saves his soul and has progressed
 In faith, these envious foes lament, distressed.
 They gnash their teeth in envy at those who
 Have gained from teachers wisdom that is true.

*The king asks the claimant to Prophethood, 'That one who is a real
 Prophet and is confirmed as such—what has he ever given to
 anyone and what will people gain by keeping his company and
 serving him other than the advice he tells?'*

The king asked him, 'What is *wahy* revelation?*' 1230
 What's gained by Prophets that's such a sensation?'
 The man replied, 'What does he not achieve?
 What fortune's left that he does not receive?'
 Although the Prophet's *wahy* is not a treasure
 It's not less than the bee's by any measure:
 When '*God inspired the bee*',* its home thereafter
 Was filled completely with the sweetest halva.
 By means of God's *wahy*'s light, it then transformed
 The world with wax and honey, which it formed.
*We honoured** Man and he soars high—so please
 Don't try to claim his *wahy*'s less than a bee's!

'*We've given you Kawsar*'*—did you not hear?
 Is that why you stay thirsty when so near?
 Perhaps you're Pharaoh and Kawsar to you 1235
 Is filled with blood and vile pollutants too?

Repent, renounce, and totally give up
 Each foe who has no Kawsar in his cup.
 Whomever you see flushed with Kawsar, he
 Has Mohammad's nature—keep his company
 To be one who *loves for God's sake**, since he
 Gets apples from the Prophet's apple tree!
 Whomever you see lacking Kawsar, know
 That man, like death and fever, is a foe,
 Be it your father or your mother too, 1240
 For they're the drinkers of your blood. It's true.
 Learn now from Abraham the way to act,
 For he renounced his father first in fact.
 You'll be one who *hates for God's sake** this way
 And God's love's jealousy won't make you pay.
 You will not find the path that leads you there
 Until '*There is just one God**' you declare.

*Story about the lover who recounted to his beloved the acts
 of service and loyalty, the long nights when 'they rise from
 their beds',* the lack of food and the parching thirst
 during long days, saying: 'I don't know of any other
 service besides these, but if there is any, direct me, for
 I do whatever you command, even if it is to walk
 through fire like Abraham, or fall into the mouth
 of a whale like Jonah, or to get killed seventy times
 like St George, or to become blind from weeping
 like Sho'ayb.* The loyalty and self-sacrifice of
 the Prophets is beyond reckoning. Then how
 his beloved answers him.*

A lover once recounted all he'd done
 In service to his own beloved one:
 'I did this and I did that all for you— 1245
 I took blows from the spears and arrows too.
 I lost my wealth, my strength and reputation;
 Due to my love I've faced much tribulation.
 No dawn found me asleep or laughing and

No night found me with things I need in hand.'
He detailed all he'd tasted in his sorrow

Of bitter dregs that he had had to swallow,
Not so she'd feel indebted, but just to

Show her a hundred times his love was true.
For intellectuals, just a hint will do,

1250

But how can lovers' thirsts be quenched thus too?
Lovers repeat themselves and still don't falter—

Can fish be sated by one hint of water?
This lover made complaints about love's suffering
Repeatedly, but claimed, 'Well, I said nothing.'

Fire was inside him, but he didn't know;

He wept like candles due to the flame's glow.

'You did all that,' then his beloved said,

'Open your ears and comprehend instead
The root of love is self-effacing love—

1255

You fell short: you gave branches of that love.'
The lover asked, 'What is that root precisely'

'Its root is dying and being naught entirely.
You did it all except the final dying.

Heed this, alive one, if self-sacrificing!'

That moment he lay down and passed away

Like smiling roses gambling heads away.

Like an endowment his smile stayed behind

And like the mystic's unharmed soul and mind.

How can the moonlight ever get unclean

1260

Although it shines on bad things that are seen?

It goes back to the moon untouched by all:

To God returns the light of mind and soul.

The moonlight's purity is everlasting

Though it might shine on an unclean and bad thing:

The light does not acquire bad attributes

From any unclean, bad thing that pollutes.

The sunlight heard '*Return!*'* and then of course

It went back hurriedly to its own source.

No stigma stayed from shining on a furnace,

1265

No hues stayed from the gardens full of roses.

The eye's sight and the seer were both returning—
The plain and desert missed them and stayed yearning.

Once a man asked a mystic scholar, 'If someone weeps aloud during the ritual prayer and sighs and moans, is the prayer invalidated by this?' The mystic scholar replied, 'The name of what is wept is "water from the seeing eyes" so it depends on what the weeper has seen with them. If he has experienced longing for God or repentance from sin, his prayer is not ruined, but rather it is perfected, for the Prophet Mohammad said, "There is no prayer except with presence of heart." However, if the person praying has experienced bodily harm or is grieving separation from a child, his prayer is ruined, because forgetting about one's body and children is the basis of prayer, as Abraham showed when he offered his son as a sacrifice in order to perfect his prayer and when he surrendered his body to Nimrod's fire. The Prophet Mohammad was commanded to adopt these ways of acting: "Follow the creed of Abraham" and "In Abraham there is a fine example for you."'**

A man once asked a mufti who was there:
 'If someone weeps lamenting during prayer,
 I wonder if his prayer is then rejected
 Or is it still thought flawless and accepted?'
 'Why is it named "the water from the eye"?'
 Consider what he saw that made him cry.
 What hidden thing did his eyes see before
 Which made its own two fountains start to pour?
 If he then saw the other world, that prayer
 Gains from it splendour that is fine and rare;
 If it was due to grief and bodily pain,
 The thread snapped and its spindle! Prayer's in vain.'

A disciple visited his shaikh (by 'shaikh', which literally means 'old man' I don't mean someone old, but an elder in terms of gnosis and intellect, even if it is Jesus in the crib or John the Baptist in infants' school). The disciple saw his shaikh weeping. He acted in conformity and also wept. Once he had stopped and had gone out of the room, another disciple who was more familiar with the state of their shaikh went after him to protect the honour of his shaikh. He said to the other disciple, 'Brother, I should have told you: God forbid that you should imagine or say that the shaikh wept and you also wept, because one has to practise self-discipline without hypocrisy for thirty years and pass through bays and oceans full of whales and high mountains full of lions and tigers for the chance of attaining the weeping of our shaikh. If you attain it, you will give thanks a great deal because, as the Prophet Mohammad said, "The earth has opened up before me."'

A dervish came before his shaikh one morning;

The shaikh was weeping then, and loudly moaning.

When the disciple saw his Master cry

He did, too, water pouring from each eye.

Someone who hears a joke laughs at that time,

1275

But deaf men also laugh a second time:

The first time is so that he is conforming

With others there because they are all chortling—

The deaf man laughs like us initially,

Not sharing our condition actually,

Then afterwards he asks, 'Why laughter, men?'

And, once he learns why, then he laughs again.

The imitator's like the deaf man here

Because the joy inside him that shines clear

Is from his master, sent out as one ray,

1280

Not from inside himself prior to that day.

As bowls of water, glasses filled with light

Aren't sources, though it seems so at first sight:

When the bowl leaves the river it is clear

To stubborn fools the water comes from here,

And when the moon sets everyone will know
 The glass's light comes from the moon's bright glow.
 He'll laugh like the true dawn with open eyes
 A second time on hearing God's '*Arise!*'*
 He'll laugh at his own previous laughter too 1285
 Since copying was all that he would do:
 'On long and distant paths that I have taken,
 Thinking I'd found truth's secrets, so mistaken—
 In that lost valley how did I rejoice
 In blindness like that?' asks his inner voice.
 'What did I falsely see? What was it really?
 My weak perception made me see it feebly.'
 The thoughts of novices and those of shaikhs:
 The latter truths, the former merely fakes:
 The child thinks of the wet-nurse and milk-drinking, 1290
 Or walnuts, raisins, crying and loud shrieking.
 The imitator's a sick child: You'll find
 His arguments and proofs are so refined—
 Engrossed in proofs and puzzles as distraction,
 This blocks him from acquiring true perception.
 He's used in solving puzzles all his kohl
 Apportioned for developing his soul.
 Turn back now from Bukhara, imitator—
 Be self-abased first, valiant hero later,
 To then see a Bukhara in your soul, 1295
 Where valiant ones *don't understand** at all.
 A courier might be fast on land this hour,
 But when in water his limbs have no power.
 He was of those *we carried on the land*;*
 Someone borne on the sea is much more grand.
 The King has much to give—run to that King
 You who're now pawn to each imagining!

That simple student out of imitation
 Wept to conform with how he saw that great one:
 He wept to copy like the deaf must do 1300
 Since of the actual cause he had no clue.
 He then left after weeping heavily;

A senior student followed hurriedly,
Saying: 'You wept like clouds that have no clue
Copying what the mystic shaikh would do.
For God's sake, good disciple, think again—

Though from conformity you seek to gain—
Don't say: "I saw that monarch weep so I
Wept just like him", for that would be a lie.

Weeping while clueless, guessing, in imitation
Is different to the weeping of that great one. 1305

Don't you equate the one type with the other
For they are truly worlds apart, my brother:
His came from thirty years of struggle, friend.

The intellect can't reach that lofty end
With scores of higher stations still up there—
Don't think the intellect can reach a share.
His weeping's not from grief or joy—beware!

The spirit knows *the fountain of the fair*.
His laughter and his weeping both come from 1310
Beyond all that the intellect can plumb.

Such tears belong to his rare eyes: that's right.

How should the sightless eye by tears gain sight?
Your sort cannot perceive what this man sees
By senses, reason, or analogies.'

Night flees when light arrives from far from sight—
How can night's darkness know about the light?

The gnat flees from the wind—how can the gnat
Know of the savour winds feel blowing that?

When the Eternal comes it voids the temporal— 1315

How can the temporal know then the Eternal?
The temporal's stunned by the Eternal's strike—

The latter naughts it then makes it alike.

You can find many parallels, it's clear.

I can't be bothered to provide more here.

This *alif lam mim** and *ha mim** both turn

To Moses's staff when you fully learn.

Though other letters look the same as these

They have inferior inner qualities.

How can a staff that someone tries out be 1320
 Like that magnificent one? Please tell me!
 It's breath's like Jesus's, not any kind,
 Nor breath that's from a sad or happy mind.
 This *alif lam** and *ha mim** both came here
 Down from the Lord of Mankind, it is clear.
 Can other letters really seem like these?
 If you've a soul don't look with just eyes, please!
 Though they're composed of letters similarly
 To writings by the generality,
 Mohammad was of flesh and skin, the same 1325
 As others' bodies with regard to frame:
 He had flesh, skin, and bones and so did they—
 In composition just the same, you'd say—
 But his had miracles by which the rest
 Were vanquished, which reveals how his was best.
 With *Ha Mim** of the holy book it's so:
 This is so lofty while the rest are low.
 Since life comes from this lofty text at last
 As from the Resurrection's trumpet blast,
 It changes to a dragon, parts the sea 1330
 Just like the staff, when God helps generously.
 Their form may look like others' at the start,
 But bread discs and the moon are far apart.
 The shaikh's tears, laughing, and his speaking too,
 Were not from him, but from God's Essence, *Hu*.*
 The stupid took the outward form alone
 So subtleties stayed hidden and unknown:
 They stayed veiled from objectives naturally;
 Though shown, they couldn't see the subtlety.

Story about the slave-girl who satisfied her sexual lusts with her mistress's donkey, which the former had taught how to have sex like a man just as goats and bears can be taught. She would fit a gourd on the donkey's penis so it would not exceed a certain length when penetrating her. The mistress found out about it, but did not see the detail of the gourd. She sent the slave-girl far away under a pretext and had sex with the donkey without using the gourd, and so she died in ignominy. The slave-girl got back too late and lamented: 'O my dear precious one, you saw the penis but not the gourd, the male member but not the other.' 'Every deficient one is cursed' means that every inner vision and understanding which is deficient is cursed. After all, those who have deficient external vision are forgiven by God Himself and not cursed.

Read: 'There is no blame on the blind.' God has eliminated the blame, the curse, the reproach, and the anger.*

A slave-girl forced upon herself no less	1335
Than a male donkey due to lust's excess!	
She'd got it used to having sex with her	
The same way that most human males prefer.	
A gourd was used for safety in this state	
To limit how much he could penetrate:	
She put it on his penis as protection,	
So only half would make the penetration—	
If all his penis had then penetrated	
Her womb and guts would have been devastated!	
The donkey grew thin and his owner there	1340
Wondered why he was thinner than a hair.	
She showed him to the blacksmith 'What is wrong	
With him that he's grown thinner for so long?'	
No sickness could be traced in him: nobody	
Could find the secret of his ailing body	
She then investigated seriously	
And her research improved increasingly—	

One's efforts must be of a serious kind
 For souls that seek to be the ones that find.
 She went to see him, but she noticed there 1345
 The slave-girl was stretched out across a chair.
 Through a door crack she saw what they did there
 And that crone truly marveled at the pair—
 The donkey was there fucking her somehow
 The way men do, controlled and with know-how!
 'How can this be?' she thought in jealousy,
 'I'm due this more as he's my property.'
 The donkey was refined and trained so well—
 The table set, the lights turned on as well.

As if she hadn't seen, she knocked and said: 1350
 'Slave-girl, how long will you sweep up?' instead,
 To play-act and disguise a little more.
 'Slave-girl, it's me, so open up the door!'

She said naught as she didn't want it known
 She'd learnt the secret to try on her own.
 The slave-girl hid the tools that she'd been using
 For the perverse act that she had been doing,
 Opened the door and showed a serious face
 As if to say, 'I'm fasting in this place',
 With broom in hand as well, as if to say 1355
 'The house was dirty so I swept all day.'
 She opened up the door with broom in hand—
 The mistress mumbled, 'Sex coach, who had planned
 To put a serious face on in that way,
 Broom in hand—Why's the donkey far from hay
 Seemingly interrupted mid-flow too,
 Angry, its penis throbbing, wanting you?'
 She mumbled so the slave-girl wouldn't hear
 And treated her as innocent and dear.
 She then said, 'Put a veil now on your face 1360
 And take a message to a certain place:
 Tell them there this and that, etcetera
 (I've shortened their talk, so it's easier—
 You'll grasp the essence of what I do say.)

Once she had sent the veiled one on her way,
 Drunken with lust, delight inside her head,
 She shut the door behind her and then said:
 'I'll shout my praise now I have privacy;
 I've fled from petty judgements totally!
 Her lust grew wild like goats' lust and she'd melt 1365
 In the sparks of the donkey, which she felt.
 Sheer lust like that of goats led her astray—
 Such giddy ones are easily led, aren't they?
 Lust makes hearts deaf and blind, so donkeys seem
 Like Josephs, fiery flame like pure light beam.
 Drunk on fire, seeking fire, yet in that plight
 So many think they're absolute, pure light
 Unless God or His Friends bring them relief,
 Attracting them to turn then a new leaf,
 Showing the fiery past imagining 1370
 Is on this path a merely borrowed thing.
 Lust makes the ugly look good in your view;
 On this path nothing's worse than lust for you.
 It has disgraced so many reputations,
 Made fools of millions of intelligent ones.
 Since it makes donkeys look like Josephs here
 Think how it will make Josephs then appear.
 Its spell makes dung seem honey to your view—
 What will its tricks make honey seem to you?
 Lust comes from eating, so reduce your intake 1375
 Or marry—flee from bad deeds for your own sake!
 Overeating will drag to the forbidden;
 Intake must all be spent and won't stay hidden.
 Marriage is saying, '*Lord, give strength to me!*'*
 So demons don't bring you calamity.
 You want to feast, so marry straight away
 Or else the cat will snatch the food away!
 Place on your donkey heavy loads right now
 Before it places loads on you somehow!
 You have no clue about fire's harm—step back! 1380
 Don't go near fire when you have such a lack!
 Lacking knowledge of fire and pot, some dared—
 Due to the flames no pot nor broth was spared:

Water and know-how must be there already
 So when it boils the pot will cook correctly.
 You don't have blacksmiths' know-how, so don't dare
 To go near there—flames burn your beard and hair.

That woman dragged the donkey, shut the door,
 Joyful, but with harsh punishment in store.
 She dragged him to a central space and lay 1385
 On her back underneath him in the way
 She'd seen the slave-girl on her chair before,
 To satisfy her lustful craving more.
 The donkey's penis grew erect and stiffer—
 It thrust in her and spread a fire within her.
 The well-trained donkey pushed in all the way
 Up to its balls and she died straight away.
 The penis in her made her liver tear;
 Her intestines were also torn in there.
 And she said nothing—on the spot she died. 1390
 The chair fell one side, she the other side.
 The room was soaked in blood. What a bad state!
 The woman fell down dead: *unfortunate fate*. *
 A bad death with so much disgrace, O father:
 She was a donkey's penis's frail martyr!
 Heed the Qur'an: '*The torment of disgrace*.' *
 Don't lose your life through such a fall from grace.
 The donkey is the carnal soul: to be
 Under it is more shameful obviously:
 If you die for the carnal soul, be sure 1395
 You're like this woman who was so impure.
 He gives our carnal soul the form of donkey
 Since forms can correspond to natures roughly:
 The Resurrection's secret we now see—
 For God's sake, flee your donkey-body! Flee!
 God warned the infidels of burning flame—
 They said, 'Fire's better than disgrace and shame.'
 'But no, that fire's disgrace's root,' God said,
 Just like the fire that left that mistress dead:
 Through lust she bit much more than she could chew, 1400

Then choked on bad death's morsel and died too.
 Eat the correct amount, you greedy lot
 Even of halva and cakes sweet and hot.
 God gave a tongue to weighing-scales. Beware!
 Read *Surat Rahman** and take special care.
 Don't quit the weighing-scales because of greed!
 Both lust and greed are foes that will mislead.
 Greed wants it all and loses it all, so
 Don't worship greed, you, son of so and so!

While walking off, that slave-girl then would say: 1405
 'Mistress, you sent the expert far away,
 Wanting to act without the teacher there—
 You'll lose your life in ignorance. Beware!
 You stole a knowledge which was incomplete,
 Ashamed to ask me of the risks you'd meet.'
 Ropes wouldn't fall on birds' necks if they ate
 From their own harvests and then shunned the bait.
 Eat less grain! Don't refill much! When you read
 '*Eat!*'* also make sure to read: '*Don't exceed!*'*
 Avoid bait—don't get trapped and die as well. 1410
 Knowledge and true contentment helps. Farewell!

The wise eat from God's bounty here, not grief;
 The ignorant have stayed deprived, in brief.
 Eating of grains is finally stopped for all
 The moment when around their throats ropes fall.
 How can a bird enjoy grains in the snare—
 Those grains are poison if they're eaten there.
 The heedless bird eats them as vulgar men
 Do likewise in the world's big trap, but then 1415
 The wise, informed birds keep a healthy distance
 From all grain used as bait with great resistance,
 Since grain in traps is of the poisonous kind—
 A bird that seeks grains there is clearly blind.
 The hunter chops off heads of foolish ones
 In traps, but leads to parties polished ones:

The former are just good for meat as food;
 The latter's songs and warbles sound so good.

The slave-girl saw through cracks inside the door
 Her mistress under it, dead on the floor.
 'Stupid mistress, what did you try to do?' 1420
 The teacher would have shown the way to you.
 You couldn't see more than just superficially,
 Yet opened up your school to claim your mastery.
 The penis was like honey cakes to you—
 How come the gourd escaped your lustful view?
 Immersed in lust you simply couldn't see
 The gourd I used for my security.
 You saw the surface of the master's craft,
 Claimed mastery with huge boasts and smugly laughed.'
 Many pretenders who are unaware 1425
 Of Sufism learned just the wool to wear.*
 Impudent ones who didn't act would only
 Learn from the greats how they could chatter boastfully,
 Each claiming, staff in hand, 'Behold, I'm Moses!'
 Or, breathing on some fools, 'Behold, I'm Jesus!'
 Wait till the day the touchstone makes it clear,
 Demanding the true ways of the sincere!
 Ask from the master all that's left to learn
 Or are you blind and too dumb to discern?
 You craved all, yet you failed to get your way— 1430
 This stupid flock is just the wolves' own prey.
 Hearing the form, you tried interpreting,
 But parrot-like you didn't know a thing.

Comparison of a master's transmission of knowledge to disciples or a prophet's to his community when they do not have the capacity for the divine transmission and lack intimacy with God, to a parrot that has no familiarity with the form of man to be able to receive transmission of knowledge from him. God holds the master like a mirror in front of the disciple, as if he is a parrot, and communicates knowledge from behind the mirror, saying: 'Do not hurry it along with your tongue—it is nothing other than divine communication.' This is the beginning of an unsolvable question: when the parrot moves its beak in the mirror's face you call it an image: it has no volition and power; it is the reflection of the actual parrot speaking, which is itself the learner actually. It is not the reflection of the teacher who is behind the mirror, but the speaking of the parrot is controlled by that teacher, so this parrot image is a comparison, not an allegory.*

A parrot sees itself when peering at
 A mirror placed in front of it like that.
 Behind the mirror stands its hidden teacher—
 That knowing and sweet-tongued one is the speaker.
 The parrot thought its image in the mirror
 Was the one talking to him and none other.
 It learnt to speak from its own kind this way, 1435
 Clueless about the teacher's cunning play:
 He teaches from behind the actual mirror,
 For it won't learn from teachers whose forms differ.
 It learnt to talk from that skilled person's teachings,
 But it does not perceive their actual meanings;
 It learnt speech from a human bit by bit—
 It can't know more of humans though, can it?
 Disciples see themselves like this too, oddly,
 Inside the mirror of God's Friend's own body.
 They can't see Universal Intellect 1440
 Behind their mirror, nor do they suspect—
 Each one believes a human's speaking there,

Clueless about the mystery, unaware.
 Each learns words, but can't know the mystery—
 They're parrots, not good friends for company.
 People learn songs of birds as well by rote,
 But that's an action of the mouth and throat.
 They don't perceive what that bird's trying to say
 As Solomon did in his special way.
 Many have learned the words of Sufis, then 1445
 Used them once on the pulpit, but these men
 Either gained nothing but the words they say
 Or God's kind mercy showed them the true way.

A mystic saw a pregnant dog with puppies barking in its belly. He was amazed and said: 'The point of the dog's barking is to keep guard, but barking in the mother's belly can't be to keep guard. Barking may also be to ask for company or milk etc., but in this situation it has none of these uses!' When he regained his composure he prayed to God: 'No one knows its interpretation but God!' As reply he was told that this is an image of the state of those people who remain veiled and have not had the eyes of their hearts opened, yet regardless claim inner vision and deep sayings. Neither strength nor support reaches them, nor does guidance reach those who listen to them.*

A Sufi on a forty-day retreat
 Once saw a pregnant dog out in the street,
 Then heard the bark of puppies suddenly
 From that dog's belly where he could not see.
 The barking stunned him: 'Can some puppies really
 Bark loudly from inside their mother's belly?
 Have any other ears heard puppies whine 1450
 While still inside their mother, or just mine?'
 He woke when he was jolted by this vision
 And with each moment he felt more confusion.
 There was no one but God while in retreat
 To now untie the knot, a major feat:
 He said, 'O Lord, because of this big question

I've been held back from *zeker* meditation.
Release my wings, so I can now fly upward
Inside your *zeker* garden and its orchard!
A voice replied to him that very moment: 1455
 'This represents the idle men's amusement,
For they remain veiled, yet with closed eyes they
 Discuss things in a vain and pointless way.'
The dog's bark in the womb is so redundant:
 It's not for guarding, neither for a real hunt.
It hasn't seen the wolf to start a fray,
 Nor robbers that it can thus drive away.
The greedy who desire to be the head
 Have little vision, but huge boasts instead:
Desiring buyers and their keen attention 1460
 They prattle nonsense and lack true perception.
They've never seen the moon yet give men signs,
 Corrupting bumpkins with their own designs.
Each does it to gain buyers and high stations;
 Without sight he gives scores of indications.
Only one buyer makes you truly gain,
 But these men's doubts about Him still remain.
To woo a worthless customer these men
 Will lose that One True Customer again.

He is our Buyer: *God has bought*,* so rise 1465
 Above concern for other buyers' eyes.
Seek out that Customer who's seeking you,
 Who knows your origin, and your end too.
Don't try to woo each customer you see,
 Don't two-time your beloved faithlessly!
If that one buys, you will not gain one pence—
 He has no wisdom nor intelligence.
He can't buy half a horseshoe, so now why
 Do you show rubies too for him to buy?
Your greed blinds you and it holds back from you; 1470
 The devil makes you like himself, cursed too,
As with Companions of the Elephant*
 And Lot's own people—he's malevolent.

The patient person finds the Purchaser,
 Since he won't sell to every customer.
 One who turns from that Buyer throws away
 Good fortune and eternal life that way.
 Eternal grief awaits all who are covetous
 As with the Zarwan people who were envious.'

*The story about the people of Zarwan and their envy of the poor: 'Our father through simpleness used to give away most of the produce of the orchard to the poor.' He gave a tithe for grapes, then also when they were turned to raisins or syrup, and also when he made halva or sherbet with them. He would also give a tithe for straw, and when he threshed it he would give a tithe for the unthreshed ears mixed with the straw, then when he separated wheat from straw he would give another tithe, and also when he made flour from it another tithe; then he would give a tithe when he made dough from that, and also another tithe when he made bread. Unsurprisingly, God placed such a blessing on that orchard and his crops that, while the other orchard owners were in need of him, both for fruit and money, he did not need anything from anyone. His sons saw the repeated payment of tithes, but did not see the blessing that came from that, like that unfortunate woman who saw the donkey but not the gourd.**

A righteous, godly man with perfect wisdom 1475
 Who always had foreknowledge of each outcome
 Once lived in Zarwan near the Yemen. He
 Was known for kindness and for charity.
 His dwelling was the Kaaba for the poor
 Because they'd come to him and feel secure.
 Without airs he would give a tithe away
 For whole ears and when wheat was threshed away.
 When it was used for flour he gave another,
 And when made into bread once more, my brother.
 He'd not omit the tithes for crops he'd grow, 1480
 Giving four times for everything he'd sow.
 That generous man would also tend to give

Advice to all his sons on how to live:
'For God's sake, don't you fail now to take heed:
Never omit the poor's share through your greed.
This way the fruit and crops won't disappear—
Obedience to our God will keep them here.'

God sent all fruits from the Unseen without
Hesitancy or calculative doubt.
If you expend where produce comes from, you 1485
Will make gains—that's the realm for profit too.
The farmer sows most crops in the same field,
For that's the origin of his last yield:
He sows most back and eats a tiny bit,
For it grows back and he's not doubting it.
The farmer's busying his hand to sow,
Since from this soil his corn began to grow.
The cobbler buys with what's left after food
Both fine grain leather and cow hide that's good:
'These have both been my income's source before— 1490
They'll bring my livelihood so I'll buy more.'
His income came from these and so of course
He generously will give back to his source.
Leather and soil are veils—it's understood
God is the real source of our livelihood.
Sow in the source's soil when you are sowing
So that a thousand more crops will start growing!
I take it that you sowed in soil you thought
Would be the means for growth, but it was not?
What will you do if nothing grows in there 1495
For years, apart from hold your hands in prayer?
You'll beat your head before God then at once—
Both head and hand prove God gives sustenance.
Thus you'll learn He's the source and people who
Seek sustenance must also seek Him too.
Seek sustenance from just Him, friend of mine,
And drunkenness, not from hashish or wine!
Seek wealth from Him too, not from property!
Seek aid from Him, not from your family!

You'll be without the others in the end, 1500
 So who will you call out to then, my friend?
 Call to Him now, forget the rest, so you
 Inherit the real wealth of this world too!
 When it's the time of '*someone flees his brother*'*
 And also of '*a son will flee his father*',*
 At that time every friend becomes a foe—
 They'd been the idols that kept your reach low,
 Since from the Painter you had turned away
 Because your heart was under His art's sway.
 If now your friends become foes similarly 1505
 And turn their face from you in enmity,
 Take heed and say: 'I've won the prize this way:
 What was tomorrow's has arrived today—
 This realm's folk have become my enemy,
 So Resurrection now is shown to me.
 Before I flit my time away by spending
 The rest of my life with such men, that's ending—
 I had bought faulty goods, but thankfully
 God made me see their flaws immediately:
 I would have lost my money otherwise 1510
 And noticed defects too late with my eyes—
 With wealth gone and life wasted I'd have bought
 Faulty goods with my life's wealth had He not.
 Like selling goods and being paid false gold
 But heading happily home once they were sold—
 Thank God the false gold was revealed to me
 Before more of my life passed wastefully.
 It would have weighed on my neck then forever,
 A shameful waste of life thus altogether,
 But since its falseness was so quickly shown 1515
 I'll quickly side-step it now it is known.'

When your past friend shows enmity to you
 And his spite's scab of envy comes to view,
 Don't feel at all bad for his new aversion—
 Don't make yourself a stupid, clueless person!
 Rather thank God and pay so all can eat:

Celebrate that you fled his vile deceit
Before becoming old—you've fled it fast
To seek the Truthful, Lasting Friend at last,
The Lovely Friend who'll always be your friend— 1520
This cord gets stronger after your life's end.
That Friend can be the Sultan, Lofty Emperor,
Or one whom He accepts as intercessor.
You've fled the counterfeiter and his crime;
You've seen his fraud before the end of time.
This world's people's mistreatment now of you
Is hidden treasure if you only knew:
People are made to mistreat you—their action
Compels you then to look in that direction.
When life ends, you should know with certainty 1525
Each will become a stubborn enemy.
You'll be left in the tomb, where you will moan,
Beseeching God: '*Please don't leave me alone!**
You whose own harshness is to me more loyal
Than loyal men—their honey's your bestowal.'
Granary-owner, listen to your brain
And now commit to *God's earth** all your grain
To keep it safe from thieves and pests there too,
Then with pests kill the demon threatening you!
He threatens you with poverty each day— 1530
Brave falcon, make that partridge now your prey!
The Mighty Sultan's falcon can't allow
A partridge to make it its prey somehow!

Their father gave advice—in doing so
Sowed seeds, but on bad soil none ever grow.
Advisers can keep counselling one for years,
But counsel also needs attentive ears.
You give advice so kindly like a brother,
But it goes in one ear then out the other.
A hundred speakers' words have no effect 1535
On those who will not listen, and reject.
Who better than the Prophets, whose fine speech
Moved rocks when they used their pure breath to preach—

But what moved rocks and mountains couldn't free
 The wretches from their infidelity.
 Such self-conceited hearts have been made known
 In the Qur'an: 'Rather, harder than stone.'^{*}

Explaining that God's bestowal and power does not depend on receptivity the way that human bestowal does, since God's bestowal is eternal while receptivity is temporal. Bestowal is God's attribute, while receptivity is the attribute of something created by God. The eternal cannot depend on the temporal, otherwise temporality would make no sense.

A gift from God is the sole remedy;
 It doesn't need your receptivity,
 Rather that needs His giving to begin. 1540
 Giving's the kernel; to receive's the skin.
 Moses's rod changed to a serpent and
 We know how God transformed to white his hand.*
 Thousands of miracles of prophets, friend,
 That even the best brains can't comprehend,
 Don't come from causes, but from God's directive—
 Non-entities can't make themselves receptive:
 Thus, receptivity's not a condition
 Since they would not exist without God's action.
 God has set causes, customs, and our pathways 1545
 For seekers under the azure, as mainstays.
 Most things will follow custom carefully,
 But Powerful God breaks that occasionally.
 He set up customs that are lovable,
 But breaks such customs with a miracle.
 Through causes most things reach us every day,
 But God can easily wipe them all away.
 Bound up in causes? Stay within their border,
 But don't imagine you don't need the Causer:
 That Causer brings about His every whim; 1550
 He rips up causes—they can't stifle Him.
 Mostly He wills through causes anyway
 So that the seeker can pursue the way:

With no cause seen what would he then pursue?
Thus, on the path he needs a cause in view.
These causes veil our vision actually
Because His work's not for all eyes to see.
One needs eyes that can see through causes here
To uproot veils so that they disappear.
They'll see the Causer then in Placelessness 1555
And learn to trade and earn is meaningless.
All good and evil come here from the Causer;
Causes and means are nothing though, O brother,
But fantasies on the King's path, no more,
To let this heedlessness continue more.

*On the start of the creation of the body of Adam with God
directing Gabriel: 'Go and fetch a handful of clay from the
ground!' Or, in another transmitted saying: 'Take
a handful from every corner!'*

When God, the Maker, wanted to make people
To put them to the test with good and evil,
He ordered Angel Gabriel, 'Straight away
Go, fetch as pledge a handful of some clay.'
Gabriel devotedly went out to do 1560
What the *Lord of the Two Worlds* asked him to:
He stretched his hand towards the ground outside,
But then the ground withdrew, so terrified,
And started to entreat him in this way:
'For the Unique Creator's sake today
Spare me my life! Please go, take leave of me,
Withdraw your fast steed's reins considerably!
Leave me, don't throw me in such tribulations
Of dangerous trials and burdened obligations.
For the sake of the kindness He has shown, 1565
Sharing the Tablet with your eyes alone,
So you became all of the angels' teacher
And kept conversing with the Lord as speaker.
Emissary to the Prophets is your role,
Life of not merely body but of soul—

Greater than Angel Esrafil whose limit
 Is bodily life, while you give life to spirit;
 His trumpet's blast makes bodies rise again,
 But your breath nurtures special hearts of men.
 The heart's life is the inner soul of bodies, 1570
 So yours is better: hearts rule over bodies.
 Angel Michael gives sustenance, but you
 Nourish illumined hearts through what you do.
 His gift fills up containers like a treasure,
 But, Gabriel, your gifts are beyond all measure.
 Better than wrathful Azrael: it's clearer
 The Prophet said that *mercy's wrath's superior*.
 You're monarch of the four who bear God's Throne;
 Due to your wakefulness, you lead alone.
 You'll see eight bearers on the Final Day, 1575
 But you will be their leader anyway.'
 The ground entreated like this out of fear,
 Guessing the reason Gabriel had come near.
 Gabriel felt so ashamed—what it would say
 To him then in entreaty blocked his way:
 It had adjured him so much that instead
 He headed back. '*Lord of us slaves*,' he said,
 'I didn't take your order lightly—You
 Know better than me what I've listened to:
 The ground appealed in that Name, out of fear 1580
 Of which the heavens stop their spin, All-Seer.
 On hearing Your Name I felt loss of honour,
 Otherwise snatching clay here is no bother—
 You've given such strength to the likes of me
 Angels can rip the skies up easily.'

*The sending of the Angel Michael to take a handful of clay from the
 ground for the formation of Adam, the blessed body of Mankind's
 forefather, God's deputy, the one to whom the angels prostrated
 and their teacher.*

God ordered Michael: 'Go below today
 And like a lion bring back here some clay.'
 When Michael reached the ground he stretched his hand

To snatch some clay from it as he had planned—
 The ground shook and began then to retreat; 1585
 It wept tears and then started to entreat:
 It made appeals with burning breast so deeply;
 With tears of blood it begged him so sincerely:
 ‘In Kind God’s Name, Incomparable, Alone,
 Who made you bearer of His Glorious Throne,
 You supervise the whole world’s sustenance,
 You serve those thirsting for His Grace at once—
 For “Michael” comes from “*kayl*”, * thus you became
 Sustenance measurer just like your name—
 Save me, set me free, though I am mere mud! 1590
 Witness that I speak while I’m drenched in blood!’
 A rich mine of God’s Mercy, Michael said:
 ‘How can I pour salt on those wounds that bled?’
 (The devil is the mine of wrath, for he
 Raised shrieks from members of humanity.)
Mercy excels wrath, and for the Creator
 Kindness is dominant in His own nature.
 God’s servants share His character of course:
 Their waterskins have His stream as their source.
 So hear God’s Messenger and Guide who led: 1595
 ‘Men will adopt their kings’ faith,’ he once said.

Michael went to the Lord of his religion
 Without the actual object of his mission:
 ‘Knower of secrets, Peerless King,’ he said,
 ‘The ground’s cries stopped me in my tracks instead.
 Tears always meant a lot to you, so I
 Could not ignore its tears when it would cry.
 Wailing and sighs as well meant much to you,
 So I could not ignore their claims here too.
 You valued teary eyes much previously, 1600
 So how could I ignore them facing me?
 Five times the servant gets the invitation:
 “Come to the prayer and make your lamentation!”
 Muezzins say, “*Come to the good!*” * That’s meant
 For hope against the odds and deep lament.

If you want one to suffer grief today
 You block his heart from entering wailing's way.
 Suffering will rain on him without protection
 When there's no desperate cry for intercession.
 If you want one released from tribulation 1605
 You lead his soul to paths of supplication.
 You said regarding those communities
 Who met your wrath: "Why didn't groups like these
 Begin to supplicate then out of fear
 So that their suffering might thus disappear?"
 Their hearts just hardened and their sins appeared
 To them as good acts that need not be cleared,
 So they did not think they were sinners then—
 How can tears flow from eyes of stubborn men?''*

*The story about Jonah's community is an explanation and evidence
 showing that entreaty and lamentation repel affliction sent from
 above, and God acts by free will, meaning that entreaty and
 magnification are effective with Him, though the philosophers
 say that He acts through His inherent nature and as a cause,
 not by free will, to make the point that entreaty cannot
 alter inherent nature.*

When Jonah's people started suffering 1610
 A flame-filled cloud left heaven, wandering—
 It hurled down lightning bolts, rocks burned down here,
 Clouds thundered, people turned pale out of fear.
 They all were on their rooftops late one night
 When they could see above what caused such fright.
 They rushed down from their roofs and after that
 Outside town without time to bring a hat.
 Mothers then even brought their children out
 So they could all shriek loudly and cry out.
 From the time of the evening prayer till dawn 1615
 These people's awful suffering carried on.
 Their voices went hoarse as they stayed so zealous—
 Mercy came to this group who'd been rebellious.
 After their unrestrained sighs and despair
 The cloud then started to retreat from there.

Since Jonah's story's too long to expound
Let's go back to the tale about the ground.
Since in God's view entreaty has much worth,
More than with others all across the earth,
Take hope and strive hard from now on each day, 1620
Rise, weeper, and keep smiling, come what may!
The Great King values tears that people cry
As much as blood of martyrs when they die.

*The sending of Esrafil to the ground in order to take a handful of
clay for the formation of Adam's body.*

God said to Esrafil, 'Go, fill your hand
With clay down there, then come back from that land!'
So Esrafil went down there next and found
That he, too, could hear moaning from the ground:
'O angel of the trumpet, from whose breath,
Ocean of life, men rise up after death.
Your trumpet's loud blast has the power to 1625
Raise up from bones men like they're born anew.
With one blast of your trumpet you can say:
"Those slain in Kerbala—rise up today!
You who were killed by death's sword raise your head
Up from the ground, like branches stretch ahead!"
The world's filled with your grace and powerful breath
Through your famed resurrection after death.
Angel of mercy, show us mercy! You
Are God's Throne's bearer and bring gifts down too.'
The Throne's the mine of equity and justice, 1630
Beneath which are four rivers of forgiveness:
Streams of honey and milk forever more,
Rivers of wine and water, making four,*
Flow from the Throne to paradise, we know—
A little, too, shows up on earth below,
Though these streams are polluted every day
By our Unwholesomeness, and our decay.
When just a little from these four arrived
On this dark earth, trouble and strife revived;

It aimed to lead base men to seek their source, 1635
 But they became content with it, of course.
 He's given milk for babies' nurturing;
 He's turned each mother's breast into a spring.
 He's given wine to drive off thoughts and grief;
 He's made grapes fountains that give bold belief.
 He's given honey as a remedy;
 He's turned to fountains parts of every bee.
 He's given water to each part you're seeing
 Around you, both for drinking and for cleaning.
 He's done all this so that you might pursue 1640
 Their source, but these fulfil you, fickle you!

Let's go back to the tale about the earth's soil
 And what she says to charm those causing turmoil:
 With a straight face she's giving Esrafil
 All kinds of flattery so it seems real:
 'By the truth of that Great One's Holy Essence,
 Don't view as lawful showing me such violence!
 I can detect the change that lies ahead
 Because suspicions swarm around my head.
 Angel of Mercy, show some now to me— 1645
 The Homa doesn't harm birds needlessly.
 O cure and mercy for those suffering pain,
 Act like the pair that came before—refrain!
 He went back to the King, begged to be pardoned
 And told God all about the things that happened:
 'You ordered me to fetch clay outwardly,
 But You inspired me not to inwardly:
 You said, "Fetch!" to my ears, but nonetheless
 To my mind You forbade hardheartedness.'
 'Mercy precedes wrath' and indeed surpasses, 1650
 Lord of good acts whose actions are so marvellous.'

The sending of Azrael, the Angel of Firm Resolve, to fetch a handful of clay so the body of Adam could be formed quickly.

God quickly said to Azrael: 'Behold

That earth that lets vain fancies take a hold!
Go to that unjust, feeble crone today
And quickly bring a handful of its clay!
Azrael, sergeant of divine fate, went
To earth to fetch clay, since he had been sent.
The earth, as is its way, began to groan,
Swearing oaths, pleading to be left alone:
'Special youth, bearer of the Throne, O you
Whom we obey on earth and heaven too,
For the sake of the Merciful One's mercy,
For that One who was kind to you—leave quickly,
For that King's sake whom people solely worship,
Who won't reject laments made due to hardship.'
'I can't let spells make me now turn away
From His commands, which can be clear as day.'
'He has commanded mercy too,' soil said.
'He ordered both, so choose this. Use your head!
'That's loose, analogical interpretation—
Don't hide clear orders with your obfuscation!
Interpret your own thinking in that way,
Not His command, which is now clear as day!
I do feel sorry hearing your entreaty,
My heart bleeds seeing salty tears flow freely.
I don't lack pity—I have more than those
Three previous ones for people suffering blows.
If I should slap an orphan while another
In kindness hands that orphan some sweet halva,
My slaps are better actually for him;
If he's beguiled by halva, woe to him!
Your loud cry makes me feel so bad for you,
But God is teaching me true kindness too:
Kindness hidden in harshness—this is it:
A priceless gemstone hidden in some shit.
God's wrath surpasses kindnesses from me;
Blocking the soul from God harms terribly.
And God's worst wrath beats clemencies, it's said—
"How good the two worlds' Lord! How good His aid!"
Hidden kindnesses do lie in store—
Give Him your life and He will give you more.

1655

1660

1665

1670

Dismiss suspicion and wrong-thinking too!

Now make your head a foot: "*Come!*"* He's told you.

His saying "*Come!*"* gives many exaltations,

Fair partners, cushions and intoxications.

In sum, I can't dilute that grand command

Or compromise it. You should understand.'

That wretched ground heard all it had to hear,

But bad suspicions still plugged up its ear.

That base ground pleaded and prostrated then

1675

In a new way just like some drunken men.

Azrael said, 'Get up and don't be scared!

Upon my life, from harm you will be spared.

Don't even think of begging me once more—

Plead to that Generous, Just King we adore.

I'm slave to His command. I can't ignore

His orders which raise dust from the sea's floor.

I won't hear talk of good and evil: I

Just listen to Him who made ear and eye.

My ear is deaf to talk of others here.

1680

He's dearer than my soul to me, that dear.

The soul came from Him, not the other way.

He gives a million souls for free each day.

How could I choose the soul ahead of God?

Why burn a rug due to one flea. That's odd.

I know of no good other than His good;

I'm *deaf, dumb, blind* to others. Understood?

My ear is deaf to all the ones who moan,

For I'm a spear held by his hand alone.

Explaining that if you are treated badly by a creature, he in reality is like an instrument. The mystic is the one who refers things to God not to the instrument. If he refers it to the instrument in expression, that's not out of ignorance but for a good purpose, the way that Bayazid said: 'It has been many years since I spoke to anyone or heard someone speak to me, though people imagine that I am talking to them and listening to them, because they do not see the Greatest Speaker, for they are like His echo to me in my state.' The intelligent listener does not listen to the echo, as the saying goes: 'The wall said to the nail: "Why are you splitting me?" The nail replied: "Look at him who is hammering me!"'

It's stupid to beg mercy from the spear, 1685
 So beg the King who holds it when you've fear.
 How can you beg instead the spear or sword,
 Both captives in the grip of the Great Lord?
 He's Azar, I'm the idol; similarly*
 I'm any instrument He makes of me:
 If He makes me a pitcher, I'm a pitcher.
 If He makes me a dagger, I'm a dagger.
 If He makes me a fountain, I'll give water.
 If He makes me a fire, I'll make things hotter.
 If He makes me rain, I'll raise a wheat stack. 1690
 And if an arrow, I'll dart in your back.
 And if a snake, I'll poison those who're near.
 If He makes me His friend, I'll serve right here.
*Between His fingers** I am like a pen:
 I'm not lukewarm like some obedient men.

Distracting the old ground with what he'd say,
 Azrael snatched a handful of its clay.
 He snatched it like he was a skilled magician,
 The ground distracted like a witless person.
 He took the clay to God, obeyed His rule, 1695
 Like taking truant students back to school.
 God said, 'By My clear knowledge I now vow
 You'll be those people's executioner now!'

He said, 'O Lord, Your creatures will regard
Me as the foe when they are hanged. That's hard.
Exalted Lord, will you do this to me
And let them view me as the enemy?'
God said, 'To them I'll make the causes clear:
Fever, colic, and madness, or the spear.
I'll turn their whole attention far from you
To sicknesses and other causes too.' 1700
He said, 'But Lord, there are some servants here
Who see through causes that You make appear.
Their eyes see through the cause shown in this place;
They penetrate the veils, thanks to Your grace:
From You they've gained the kohl of Unity:
They see beyond pain and infirmity:
They don't view fever, colic, or consumption;
Their hearts don't grant such causes there admission.'

Since all such ailments have a remedy, 1705
When they're incurable it's God's decree.
Each ailment has a cure. Know this for sure:
For feeling cold a fleece-lined coat's the cure,
But when God wishes that a man should freeze
Coldness will pass through countless coats with ease—
God gives him shivers that have no known cure,
Neither with clothes, nor homes snug and secure.
Physicians turn to fools if He decrees
And all the cures will lose their potencies.
How can the visionary's perception be 1710
Veiled by the causes simple idiots see?
The perfect eye can see the root so clearly;
The squint-eyed man can see the branches merely.

*The answer that came from God: 'The one whose vision goes beyond causes, illnesses, and wounds will see beyond your actions, Azrael, for you are also a secondary cause, even though you are more hidden than those other causes. And maybe this is also not hidden from the sick person: "He is nearer to him than you, but you do not see."'**
 *

'The one who sees the roots of things', God said,
 'Won't notice you appear in front instead.
 You're hidden from the general population,
 But seen as veil by eyes with inspiration,
 For if death's hour is sweet to one's perceptions
 His vision's not distorted by possessions.
 To him the body's death's not hard to face 1715
 Because they'll leave gaol for a better place,
 An open field. They'll leave the world of suffering—
 Nobody weeps for losing what's worth nothing.
 If a gaol's watchtower ever is knocked down
 No prisoners will feel bad for it and frown,
 Saying, 'Alas, the marble cracked as well
 So now our souls can flee the prison cell.
 That lovely marble and that noble stone
 Of the watchtower were lovely and well-known—
 Why did one break them, letting prisoners flee? 1720
 For this crime chop his hands immediately!
 No prisoner would say nonsense of this kind
 Unless they'll now be hanged—then they would mind.
 Why would a man feel bitter if his treat
 Is fleeing poison for what's sugar sweet?
 Freed from the body's turmoil, souls will fly
 On the heart's wings, without legs, and soar high,
 Just like a prisoner down a dungeon who
 While dreaming sees a rose garden in view:
 'God, don't return me to my body, please— 1725
 I want this rose garden's fine luxuries.'
 God says, 'Your prayer is granted. Don't go back.'
God knows best what is the most fitting track.
 How lovely such dreams look to the mind's eyes—
 Without one dying one sees paradise!

Would one then miss one's body one small bit
 Or being awake, chained in a deep, dark pit?
 Believer, join the battle ranks—you'll find
 A feast awaits in heaven for your kind.
 With hope of soaring high, stand up young man 1730
 Candle-like at the prayer-niche, if you can;
 Weep tears all night, in seeking burn away
 Like candles that from top down melt away!
 Seal up your mouth to food and drink—instead
 Hurry off to the heavenly table spread!
 Fix all your hopes on heaven constantly,
 Dance longing for it like a willow tree!
 From heaven fire and water come to you
 Each moment to make daily bread grow too.
 Don't be surprised if you're led there this hour; 1735
 Don't think of weakness, but your seeking's power!
 Your seeking is what God has placed in you—
 Each search fits well with what it's seeking too.
 Strive so your yearning burns more powerfully,
 So that your own imprisoned heart can flee.
 People will say, 'Poor so-and-so died then.'
 You'll answer, 'I'm alive, O heedless men!
 My body's laid to rest like all that part,
 But eight bright heavens now bloom in my heart.'

When spirit lives among the roses, it 1740
 Will not care that the body lies in shit—
 The spirit truly doesn't care about it
 Whether it's in a rose garden or ash pit.
 The spirit shouts in yonder world once there:
 '*If only my own people were aware!*'*
 But if the spirit weren't to leave the body
 Who'd dwell in heaven's palace then? Nobody.
 If spirit won't live when the body's dead
 What then is '*heaven has your daily bread?*'*

*Explaining the harm of sweet and greasy food in this world and how they block you from the Food from God, as it is said: 'Hunger is the Food from God with which He revives the bodies of the true ones', meaning that the Food from God comes after hunger. The Prophet has also said, 'I pass the night with my Lord and He gives me food and drink.' God has said, 'They are given provisions and rejoice.'**

If you side-step these foul scraps as you should, 1745
 You'll then find pastries and most glorious food.
 Though you eat many kilos of such pastries
 You will stay light and pure just like the fairies—
 They won't give kidney pains and flatulence
 Or torture you with belly aches, not once.
 If you eat little here, you're hungry still,
 And you'll belch loudly if you eat your fill.
 Eat little and you'll suffer a bad mood
 And aches; feel bloated when you're full with food.
 Through *food from God* and His refined nutrition 1750
 You'll sail off like a ship across the ocean.
 Be patient and persistent when you fast,
 Ready for God's food to arrive at last.
 God, who acts kindly and lifts burdens too,
 Bestows gifts when they're in expectant view:
 A sated man won't count the time and wait:
 'Will my food come now or will it be late?'
 But someone starving will ask, 'Where is it?'
 After his search, as he's expecting it—
 The food won't come unless you are expectant 1755
 From that realm which is totally transcendent.
 Wait for it to reach you expectantly
 As for the feast of heaven, valiantly!
 All hungry men find food eventually:
 Fortune's sun shines on each one generously.
 When an expectant guest eats little food
 The host will bring instead a dish that's good
 Unless he's poor or suffers avarice—

Don't doubt Providing God, who's generous!
 Lift your head like tall mountains you can view 1760
 So that the sun's first rays fall onto you!
 That solid, lofty mountain peak you see
 Waits for the sun to rise, expectantly.

*Response to the stupid person who said, 'This world would be lovely
 if there were no death and worldly wealth would be lovely if it were
 not transient', as well as other similar vain talk.*

'The world would be so lovely,' someone said
 'If only we would not all end up dead.'
 'If there were no death,' someone else replied,
 'It wouldn't be worth straw that's stacked and tied.
 More like an unthreshed and unused old stack
 Left in the field, for which no one turns back.
 You're claiming death is life—you are just sowing 1765
 Your seeds in barren soil where they're not growing.
 Deceitful reason sees things back to front:
 It claims life's death—you, fool, are ignorant!'

O God, show everything the way it is
 In truth in this realm of deceptiveness!
 No one who's died regrets death, though he may
 Regret preparing little for that day.
 He's left a pit for a vast open plain
 With fortunes, pleasures, joy in that domain,
 Transported there from a house filled with sorrow 1770
 And mourning that was hideous and so narrow.
 Not lies, but a great seat of truthfulness,
 Drunk on fine wine and not feigned drunkenness,
 From this material fire-temple he's bound
 To that famed Seat of Truth where God is found.
 If you've not lived so far enlightenedly
 Only seconds remain—die valiantly!

*Concerning what can be hoped for from the Mercy of God,
who bestows bounties before they have been earned:
‘He is the one who sends down rain after they have
despaired.’* Many separations produce closeness,
there are many sins that are blessed, and many
joys arrive when punishment is expected
instead ‘so that you know that God
changes their bad deeds to good ones’.**

As said in our dear Prophet’s own tradition:

Bodies are told ‘Arise!’ at Resurrection.

Holy God’s order is the trumpet blast:

1775

‘Lift up your heads from those soil graves at last!’

Each soul returns to its own body then

As consciousness returns each dawn again.

Souls recognize their bodies at dawn too,

Entering its ruins just like treasures do:

They recognize their bodies and they enter

The goldsmith’s soul won’t go in a clothes mender;

The scholar’s soul returns in the professor;

The tyrant’s soul goes back to that oppressor.

Divine knowledge bestows this recognition,

1780

As lambs know their own ewes through intuition.

The foot can tell in darkness its own shoe—

Of course, my dear, souls find their bodies too.

Dawn’s the small resurrection, refuge seeker:

Analogy reveals which one’s superior—

The books of deeds fly left and right that day

Just as the soul at dawn flies back to clay—

The books of meanness, generosity,

Corruption, shifting moods, and piety.*

When one awakes at dawn from slumber, then

1785

The good and evil both return again:

If he had been self-disciplined before,

The disciplined self will come to the fore,

But if he’d been vile, immature, astray,

His left hand mourns its black list on that day.*

If he had been devoted, pure, and zealous,

When he awakes he gains a pearl that's precious.
 Our sleep and waking testify to you:
 They tell of death and resurrection too.
 The lesser resurrection shows the greater; 1790
 The lesser death reveals the death that's major.
 These books are unclear and imagined here;
 In the Great Resurrection they'll be clear:
 A hidden fancy here with mere hints shown,
 It will grow there to real forms widely known.
 The architect's idea for future structures
 Is in him like a seed in soil that nurtures:
 When the idea that's inside him comes out
 It's like what seeds in soil will cause to sprout.
 Every idea in his head one could mention 1795
 Becomes a form at its own resurrection—
 The architect's idea that his mind knows
 Is like the seed in soil that quickly grows.

With these two resurrections I intend
 To teach their moral to believers, friend.
 On Resurrection's sunrise all around
 The foul and fair will rise up from the ground.
 They'll run to destiny's court to be tried,
 The crucible with real and false inside:
 The real coin will go there so joyfully, 1800
 The false coin with extreme anxiety.
 And then each moment tests arrive and start;
 Bodies disclose the secrets from the heart,
 As when a lamp shows water and its oil
 And when fresh saplings rise up from the soil:
 Through onion, leek, and poppy flowers we see
 Winter's secret in spring so vividly.
 'We are devout,' the verdant say; instead,
 Like violets, others drop their heads in dread,
 Eyes boggling due to danger that awaits, 1805
 Weeping like fountains, fearful of their fates;
 Their eyes can only wait there open wide,
 Dreading the book of deeds on the left side.*

Their eyes roll left then right to try to see—
Books don't come on the right side readily.
A book comes to a man that brings distress,
It's all black, full of sins and wickedness,
Without a single good deed's saving grace,
Just harm caused to the saints' hearts in its place,
Foulness and sins from top to bottom and 1810
Mockery of all the mystics in the land,
With all his thefts and fraud, each single lie,
And Pharaoh-like pretentious claims for 'I'.*
Once that wretch reads his own book he will know
His onward journey's to the place below.
Like thieves he'll climb the gallows, though that's hard,
Sins clear to all, forgiveness's way barred,
Those numerous claims and his justification
Stuffed in his mouth to give him suffocation,
Stolen goods on his person or soon found 1815
At his home, but excuses not around.
He walks now to the gaol of hell with blame,
Because thorns cannot ever flee the flame.
Those angels front and back that were unseen
Now, like police guards, can be clearly seen.
They prod him as they lead him now away:
'Go to your kennel, dog!' we hear them say.
He drags his feet so much along the street,
Hoping he can avoid the fate he'll meet,
Then stands expectantly, but makes no sound; 1820
In hope he tries to turn his face around.
Tears pour down now just like autumnal rains—
Apart from hope what else of his remains?
He keeps on looking back continually
To face the Holy Court and its decree.

From radiant realms, God sends down His command:
'Tell him: "You biggest wastrel in the land,
What do you now expect, you wicked one?
Why do you look around still, giddy one?
Your book of deeds has reached your hand, you who 1825

Annoy God and still worship Satan too.
Since you have seen your book, why have you turned
To look back? Look instead at what you've earned!
Why do you tarry pointlessly? What right
Do you have to seek in the pit some light?
Neither were you obedient outwardly,
Nor did you then aspire to inwardly.
Neither did you stay up at night to pray,
Nor did you fast and do without by day.
Neither did you avoid bad things you said, 1830
Nor did you look behind or up ahead:
What is ahead? Your death and agony.
What is behind? Your friends' deaths previously.
Neither was there repentance for oppression,
You who showed wheat for barley in deception.
Your weighing-scales weren't telling the right weight,
Yet you hope you'll be fairly judged by fate?
Since you leant to the left with all your fraud
Why should your right hand get your book from God?*

What you earn is a shadow next to you, 1835
Hunchback, that's why your shadow is hunched too."'
Such harsh words come from that side now to you
That even would bend sides of mountains too.
The slave says, 'I'm a hundred times worse, Lord,
Than what you have expounded, every word.
You covered up worse things. You're generous
Though You've full knowledge of my wickedness.
Putting aside my efforts and exertion,
Good, evil, unbelief, devout religion,
My supplications made so powerlessly, 1840
Fancies and whims of mine and men like me,
Being upright or being wicked in its place,
I always held out hope in Your pure grace
And Your pure kindness to us all regardless
O Generous One who gives to all regardless.
I turned towards Your generosity
And I ignored my actions totally;
I turned to hope in You immediately
For You gave me my being originally:

For free You gave the robe of my existence—
I've always counted on You from that instance.'

1845

When one recounts one's sins one then will see
The purest kindness come so generously,
Saying: 'Angels, since that man's heart's own eye
Kept facing hope bring him to us on high.
As if it matters not, we'll set him free
And cross out all his sins most generously.
(Someone like God can say he doesn't care
When he does not gain by being thus unfair.)
We'll light a lovely fire by being kind
So no sins and no errors stay behind,
A lovely fire from which the smallest flame
Burns up free will, compulsion, sin, and blame.
We'll set fire to the home of all Mankind,
Make mystic roses from soil left behind.
We sent the alchemy from the ninth heaven
Like this *to rectify your every action.* *
What then is Mankind's power and will next to
The Light of the Eternal Realm that's true?
A piece of flesh is Mankind's speech's source,
A piece of fat his eyesight's nearest source,
Two bones make up the source of Mankind's hearing,
The heart, two drops of blood, their source of feeling.
You're just a tiny worm that lives in shit
Yet in this world you've shown off quite a bit—
You came from sperm, so put conceit behind!
Ayaz, keep that fleece jacket still in mind!

1850

1855

*The story about Ayaz and his maintaining a closet for his
old rustic boots and fleece coat and how his peers believed
he had buried treasure in that closet because the door was
so solid and the lock was so heavy.*

Inspired by wisdom, Ayaz would keep hold
Of his fleece coat and boots, both torn and old.

He'd go inside their closet every day: 1860
 'These are your boots—don't feel grand!' he would say.
 'He has a closet,' once the king was told,
 'With silver, a fine jar, and lots of gold.
 He won't let anyone come in and he
 Keeps its door locked with high security.'
 'How strange! What would that servant want to hide
 From me, his ruler?' their great king replied.
 'At midnight, go there!' he told a commander,
 'Open that closet's locked door and then enter!
 Whatever you find there will come to you— 1865
 Reveal his secrets to my courtiers too!
 Despite honours and kindnesses from me
 Does he hide gold from me objectionably?
 Perhaps he shows love, loyalty, and zeal,
 To show wheat then sell barley in a deal?
 Anyone with a love-filled life so good
 Shows unbelief if he shuns servanthood.'
 At midnight that commander with his men
 Resolved to go there and unlock it, then
 Thirty strong, trusted men with torches raised 1870
 Marched to the closet happily and in haste:
 'It's the king's order—let's do as we're told:
 We'll raid it and each get a bag of gold!
 One of them said, 'What's gold? He has in there
 Cornelians, rubies, gems beyond compare.'

Privileged to maintain the treasury;
 The king adored him so incredibly—
 How can one who is loved that much still value
 The jewels about which greedy men will argue?
 The king did not at all suspect him then— 1875
 He was play-acting, testing other men.
 He knew that he was free from fraud and faking
 Yet due to this thought his heart started shaking:
 'Don't let this be! I don't want him to face
 Suffering nor to now endure disgrace.
 He hasn't done this, though he's able to;

I love him—he can do what he wants to.
Whatever he does it is done by me;
Though veiled from others, he is I, I he.’
He went on, ‘It is so unlike his manner—
This fuss is fuelled by meaningless palaver.
It is impossible for him. Trust me.

1880

Ayaz is like a bottomless, vast sea.
In it the seven seas are just one drop;
All being is its waves’ crests’ foam on top.
All holiness is gained from that great sea;
Its drops each can perform much alchemy.
He is the king of kings and the king-maker—
We say “Ayaz” because of envy’s danger:
Good eyes are evil eyes because of envy
When near Ayaz due to his peerless beauty.’

1885

A mouth as vast as the wide sky above me
Is needed to describe what angels envy!
If I get one mouth like this, that’s too small—
Even a hundred—to describe it all.
I shouldn’t say this much about this matter—
The heart’s glass is too fragile and will shatter.
Since my heart’s glass is far too fragile, I
Rend my own cloak as means to pacify.
The first three days of every month, my beauty,
I must without a doubt become a loony:
Today’s the first day, so beware of me—
It’s not for turquoise, but for victory.*
It is the first day of the month each moment
For hearts to which the King’s love gives such torment.
The tale of Mahmud and Ayaz turned messy
Because this lunatic became so crazy!

1890

*Explaining that what is related is the outward form of the story,
and that the outward form suits those who can absorb only that and
the mirror image of their imagination. However, due to the
transcendent nature of the essence of this story, speech feels ashamed
to reveal it, and due to shame it loses its head, proud beard, and
pen! The intelligent one is satisfied with just a hint.*

My elephant has dreamt of India now;
This hamlet's wrecked—don't hope for tax somehow!
So how can verse and rhyme still come to me 1895
With roots of good health ruined totally?
I have more than one madness in love's sadness:
It's madness upon madness upon madness.
My body melts through that world's indications;
I view subsistence in annihilations.
Ayaz, my love for you has made me thin—
I can't narrate more, so now you begin!
I've said so much about your love—you tell
About mine now! I'm like a tale as well.
You now narrate, not me, you whom men follow! 1900
I'm Sinai, you are Moses, this the echo.
How can a mountain understand our speech?
It lacks the knowledge Moses has in reach.
The mountain only knows to its own limit
The body's only slightly graced by spirit.
The body has the astrolabe's own role:
It tells you where to find the sun-like soul.
Astronomers who do not have good sight
Need one who makes the astrolabes just right
To make one for them to provide a clue 1905
About the sun they seek, but cannot view.
If a soul needs an astrolabe, that one
Can't know that much about the sky and sun.
You look through the eye's astrolabe, but see
Only a tiny bit with certainty.
You've seen the world through your eyes' limits only—
Where is the world? Why feel proud and act boastfully?
Mystics possess a special kohl to see—
Seek it, turn your eye's stream into a sea!

If reason and my wits had stayed with me
What is this crazy speech of mine? Tell me!
My brain's lost reason and all consciousness
So you can't fault me for my craziness—
It's his fault: he stole my intelligence;
All scholars nearing him lose theirs at once.
*You who lead wits and reason far astray,
Our minds have only you for hope today.
I've not missed reason while you've made me crazy,
Nor envied beauty while you decorate me,
So is my madness loving you thought good?*
Say: 'Yes!' May God reward you as one should!
Whether he speaks in Arabic or Persian
Which ears and minds possess its comprehension?
His wine's not right for every mind, that's clear;
His slavery's earring won't fit every ear.
I've come back like a madman once again—
Soul, go away and quickly fetch a chain!
If it's not my beloved's tress, I'll just
Break chains you bring, a hundred if I must!

1910

1915

*The wisdom of reflecting on his old boots and fleece coat, for
'Let Man reflect on what he has been created from.'**

Bring back Ayaz's love's tale now for me,
For that's a treasure full of mystery!
He would go to that closet every day
To see his boots and old coat, come what may.
Being intoxicates self with great might,
Stealing your reason, wiping shame from sight.
From hiding places these intoxications
Have waylaid millions of past generations:
Azazil turned to Satan tragically:
'Why now should Adam lord it over me?*'
I'm noble, nobly born and I am ready
For countless virtues to reach me already.
I'm not inferior in good qualities
To have to serve foes like him on my knees.
I was born from great fire, he from mere clay—

1920

1925

Clay can't compete with fire in any way.
 Where was he when I was a major leader
 In this world and the glory of the era?

On 'He created the Jinn from smokeless fire' and His words
 about Satan: 'He was of the Jinn and transgressed.'**

Flames blazed within that wretched simpleton;

He was of fire: *like father's soul, like son.*

But no, it was God's wrath. I've got it wrong

1930

To give a cause when it does not belong.

The causeless act is causeless totally,

Fixed from the start of time eternally.

How can a transient thing with imperfection

Be found in acts of holiest perfection?

What is *the father's soul*? His works, the kernel.

Its shell's the father whose form is external.

O nut-like one, know love's your friend as well;

Your soul's love seeks that kernel, breaks the shell.

To that man who was bound to go to hell

1935

And loved mere forms God gave another shell.

Kernel and inner being both can rule

Over the fire, but shells are just fire's fuel.

When there's stream water in a wooden pot

The pot's what feels the flames that are so hot.

Man's inner soul rules over fire, so it,

As ruler, can't now be destroyed by it.

Grow your soul bigger, not your body—you

Can then be the fire's king-like ruler too.

You have been adding shell, layer upon layer,

1940

That's why you're just like shells in smoky air.

The fire has only shells as fuel inside,

So God's wrath tears off all that shell of pride.

This pride's a product of the shell: it fits

That wealth and rank are its associates.

What's pride? Heedlessness of the depths inside

Like heedless ice in sunshine's heat outside:

Once it learns of the sun, then it won't stay

But rather soften, warm, and melt away.

- The body craves on seeing the kernel. Yes,
It falls in love: *craving brings lowliness*.
When it can't see the kernel it likes skin—
'Well done content one!' is the gaol it's in.
Might's unbelief here, faith is lowliness;
A stone becomes a gem by being less:
Boasting 'I' while a stone still is misplaced—
This is the time to be small and effaced.
Pride seeks more wealth and status constantly,
But furnaces with dung work properly:
Those first two nurses just increase the shell
With arrogance, pride, fat, and flesh as well;
They've not looked up to see the kernel's kernel,
So they imagine that mere shell's the kernel.
Satan was this path's big chief, don't forget,
Yet he got trapped in status's big net.
Wealth's like a snake, status a dragon—you
Will find with pure men emeralds for these two:
That emerald makes the snake's eyes jump right out—
It turns blind and the wayfarer breaks out.
When that chief placed sharp thorns right in the way
Those pricked said, 'Be cursed, Satan!' every day,
Meaning: 'The pain comes from his perfidy;
He's the first model of such treachery—
Generation after generation
Then followed him by serious emulation.'
Whoever sets a bad example so
People fall blindly later in much woe
Discovers their sins on his neck instead
Since they're its tail's tip while he is its head.
- Adam brought out his coat and old boots though
And said, 'I am of clay,' so long ago,
Like Ayaz's, those boots were viewed a lot—
That's why he finally got the praise he got.
Absolute Being's the Craftsman in non-being—
What can His workshop be then but non-being?
No one would write on previous script would he,

1945

1950

1955

1960

Nor plant on top of old plants a new tree?
 One seeks some paper with no writing on
 And sows on land that nothing's been grown on—
 Brother, you be a fresh and unfarmed place 1965
 And whitest paper with no writing's trace,
 To then be honoured by '*Nun and the pen*'*
 And God, the Generous, sows seed in you then.
 Imagine you've not tasted sweets nor seen
 The well-stocked kitchen where you've often been,
 For they intoxicate you such that you
 Forget your old boots, and your fleece coat too.
 You'll sigh when you meet death's most tortuous pain,
 Remembering then your boots and coat again.
 Until you're drowning in the hideous sea 1970
 From which there is no help or sanctuary,
 You won't remember the right rescue boat—
 You won't look at your boots and your fleece coat.
 When you're left in the drowning waves of woe
 You'll constantly say '*We've done wrong!*'* and know.
 Satan will say, 'He's still naïve. Come chop
 This bird's head—its untimely cry must stop.'
 Far be it from Ayaz's path that prayer
 Should be an empty sham for watchers there—
 He had been heaven's rooster previously: 1975
 His crowing always started punctually.

On the meaning of the prophetic tradition: 'Show us things as they are!' And on the meaning of the tradition: '*If the veil were lifted my certainty would be increased.*' And on the poet's verses:

*'When you should look at someone negatively
 You're looking from your own view, narrowly.'
 'The crooked ladder casts a crooked shadow . . .'*

Rooster-like preachers, learn from him to crow!
 He crows for God, not money—that's so low.
 False dawn can't fool him: he has not been had.
 (The false dawn is the world of good and bad.)
 Worldly men's brains are lacking, obviously,
 Since they believed it was dawn actually.

False dawns caused caravans to lose their way:
They would depart assuming it was day.
May the false dawn not lead men any more— 1980
It's ruined many caravans before!
You're captive to the false dawn, but don't you
Consider a false dawn the dawn that's true!
You've no defence from falseness and from evil,
But why suspect the same from other people?
The wicked are suspicious thus always:
They see in other men their own flawed ways.
Those wretches who're corrupt and hold suspicions
Have claimed the prophets are corrupt magicians,
And fabricating leaders who were base 1985
Suspected Ayaz and his closet space,
Imagining he had a hoard of treasure—
Don't look at others inside your own mirror!

The king himself knew of his holiness;
He went along for their sakes nonetheless:
'Open that closet's door at midnight, men!
He will not have a clue what's happening then.
His secrets will be thus made manifest
And after I'll treat him how I think best.
I grant you all the gold and jewels in there; 1990
I want none—I just want to be aware.'
As he said this, his heart began to pound
For peerless Ayaz. He made no more sound
But thought: 'Does my tongue say this actually?
What will he do on seeing this from me?
By the truth of his faith, his steadfastness
Is far too great that he should feel distress
Or angry at my terrible aspersion
And not work out my actual good intention.'
When wounded men can see the reason why 1995
They suffer, they sense triumph and won't die.
Interpreters are, like Ayaz, so patient:
They view the sea of outcomes that are latent,
Like Joseph—what the prisoners' dreams must mean

Is obvious to him—when God's Friend has seen
 The other people's dreams' deep mystery
 How can his own dream's then stay hard to see?
 If I stab him a lot, his being one
 With me won't weaken through what I have done:
 I stab myself in actuality—
 He knows! I'm truly him and he is me.'

2000

Explaining the union of the lover and the beloved in actuality even though they are opposites in that neediness is the opposite of being without need. Similarly a mirror is formless and clear although being formless is the opposite of form, yet in actuality there is a union between them, but this needs a long explanation.

A mere hint suffices the wise.

Majnun once fell ill and it was all due
 To grief and separation he went through.
 The flame of longing boiled his blood so quickly
 Such that Majnun got very ill with quinsy.
 A doctor came to treat him and left saying:
 'There is no way to heal him but by draining:
 You must remove his blood now with great care.'
 A skilled phlebotomist was then brought there:
 He bandaged Majnun's arm and held his blade—
 The lover then immediately said:
 'Quit the blood-letting! You can take your fee.
 If my old body dies, it's meant to be.'
 He answered, 'How did my blade manage to
 Do what the jungle's lions couldn't do?
 Lions, bears, onagers, and fierce wolves too,
 At night could all be very close to you.'
 You won't emit to them a human smell
 When there is too much love in you as well.
 The lion, bear, and wolf all know what love is;
 One blind to love is lower than a dog is.
 If dogs don't have one vein of love within
 How could the Seven Sleepers' dog begin
 To seek hearts? There are many dogs like that
 Even if they're not famous or looked at.

2005

2010

If you've not smelt a heart in your own kind
You won't smell it in wolves or sheep. You'll find.
Without love there'd be no existence too—
How should mere bread have joined as part of you?
How did it? Love and appetite achieved it
Otherwise how could bread reach any spirit?
Love turns to living soul this lifeless bread
Makes transient lives eternal ones instead.

Majnun said, 'I don't fear knives of physicians—
My patience is more solid than a mountain's.
I am a tramp—my body's used to blows,
And lovers always get them, heaven knows.
My being's filled with Layli totally,
A shell with that pearl's every quality.
I'm scared that if you bleed me now, blood-letter,
Your lancet entering me might also cut her—
The wise one with illumined heart can see
We aren't separate, my Layli and me.'

A beloved asked her lover, 'Who do you love more—me or yourself?' He answered, 'I have died to myself and have become living through you. I've become annihilated from self and my own attributes and exist through you. I have forgotten my own knowledge and have become knowledgeable through your knowledge. I have forgotten my own power and have become powerful through your power.'

*If I love myself, it is you I love;
And if I love you, it's myself I love:
'Whoever has the mirror of certainty
Looks at himself, but it is God he'll see.'*

'Go forth with My attributes to my creatures. Whoever sees you sees Me and whoever sets off towards you sets off towards Me' etc.

To test him a beloved asked her lover
Over a morning drink, 'Dear, how I wonder
Who is it that you love more—me or you?

O man of sorrow, tell me what is true!
 'I have become effaced in you,' he said,
 'Such that I'm filled with you up to my head.
 Nothing's left in my being, my name apart;
 Nothing's left there but you, love of my heart.
 I have become effaced in you so fully
 Like vinegar inside a sea of honey.'
 It's like a stone that turns into a ruby
 Filled with the sunshine's features most profusely:
 The stone's own qualities don't stay, we've found—
 It's filled now with the sunshine's all around.
 If it should love itself then after that
 It's love that's for the sun we're looking at;
 And if it loves the sun now totally
 It is love of itself assuredly.
 Whether the ruby loves itself or whether
 It loves the sun, you must know altogether
 There is no difference now between these two—
 Both are the light of sunshine through and through.
 Until turned ruby, that stone is its foe
 With two 'I's' still, not one, as you should know;
 The stone is dark and blind to day—that's right:
 Darkness is the true opposite of light.
 It loves itself? Then it's an infidel;
 It's the sun's biggest blocker then as well.
 So then it's not right for the stone to say:
 'I—it's still dark and subject to decay.
 Pharaoh said, '*I am God*', and grew depraved;
 Hallaj said, '*I am God*', and he was saved.*
God's curse is what came down next for the former,
 The latter gained *God's mercy* though, O lover.
 That was a stone, this one a jewel so bright—
 Light's lover, while the former hated light.
 Hallaj's 'I' was 'He' so stop your meddling—
 That oneness of light isn't like indwelling.*
 Strive hard till you reduce your stoniness,
 So then your stone can shine with rubiness.
 Be patient when you strive and face vexation—
 See your subsistence post-annihilation.*

2025

2030

2035

2040

Your stoniness will keep becoming less
And you will gain more lasting rubiness.
Your self-existence will depart—instead
Intoxication will grow in your head.
Just like an ear, become entirely hearing, 2045
So you might then acquire a ruby earring!
Dig earth like a well-digger if you've worth—
Reach water in this body made of earth!
If God's pull comes, the water will gush out
From earth without the need to dig wells out.
Don't only listen, but strive hard and toil,
Keep gradually scraping out the new well's soil!
Whoever braved affliction found a treasure;
Whoever worked hard gained with equal measure.
The Prophet said, 'To bow and to prostrate 2050
Is knocking on the mystical path's gate—
Whoever swings that door knocker finds out
For his sake hidden fortune will come out.'

That amir who made the accusation came with his officers at midnight to open up Ayaz's closet and saw the fleece coat and old boots hanging there. They supposed that this was a ploy and decoy, and so they dug up every suspicious nook, brought excavators and made holes in the walls. However, they discovered nothing and became embarrassed and fell into despair. Suspicious men who think ill of the works of Prophets and Friends of God are like this, claiming that they were sorcerers and were building themselves up in pursuit of leadership—after looking closely they feel embarrassed, but it will not benefit them.

All those entrusted men came to the door
Of his locked closet, seeking gold and more.
A few of them unlocked it skillfully
Using the know-how they'd learnt previously.
It was a complicated lock and hard to open.
Out of so many locks this one was chosen,
Not to hoard wealth and gold, but just to hide 2055
The secret from the vulgar, safe inside.
He'd thought, 'Some might think bad things if they see;

Others might say, "You hypocrite!" to me.
 The mystic's secrets of his soul are kept
 Safer than gems from the base and inept.
 The fool will deem gold better than the spirit;
 The wise know that they have misunderstood it.

They rushed in fast due to their greed for gold—
 'No, slow down!' by their own brains they were told.
 Greed rushes to the mirage pointlessly; 2060
 The brain warns, 'That's not real. Look carefully!'
 Greed ruled and deemed gold like the soul, and so
 The brain's yells were all muffled and kept low.
 Greed's clamour's volume very much increased;
 Wisdom's prods were all muffled and decreased.
 The greedy man falls in delusion's pit
 And hears from wisdom censure after it—
 Once his inflated pride has finally burst
 The blaming soul* controls him, not at first.
 Until the head bangs on affliction's wall 2065
 Deaf ears can't hear the heart's advice at all.
 Greed for nut cake and sugar, which tastes nice,
 Makes children's ears deaf to your good advice,
 But once an abscess forms that causes pain
 Their ears then open to advice again.

Those men then opened up the closet's door
 With greed and lust of various kinds in store;
 They flooded in the room once it was clear
 Like flies to rotten buttermilk that's near
 They fell in there like lovers who'd found luck 2070
 But couldn't drink it and their wings got stuck.
 They looked around, saw nothing there of note
 Apart from his torn boots and old fleece coat:
 'There can't be nothing here that gives one pleasure—
 The boots are just a decoy for the treasure.
 Bring some sharp picks to find what he's concealing,
 Check now behind all of the walls and ceiling!'

That group dug out holes everywhere—they'd keep
Digging out holes and ditches that were deep.
The holes were shouting out, 'Do you not see,
You stinkers, I'm an empty cavity?' 2075
Embarrassment then filled those scheming men
For what they'd thought—they filled the holes again.
Prayers filled their breasts; the bird of these men's greed
Was left without seed now on which to feed.
The holes left in the wall and door became
Informers of their wayward, futile aim.
These walls could not be plastered smooth again:
Ayaz could not be thus denounced by men.
If they went and pretended innocence 2080
The floors and walls would give much evidence
Against them. They went back from where they came
To their king very dusty, pale with shame.

*The accusers return from Ayaz's closet to the king with empty bags
and ashamed like those who thought ill of the Prophets once their
innocence and holiness were made manifest, for 'On the day some
faces will be bright and others gloomy',* and 'You will see those
who lied against God, their faces gloomy.'**

The king then asked, 'What happened at the closet?
Your hands are empty—no gold and no wallet?
If you've concealed all of the money's traces
Why isn't there bright joy now on your faces?'
Although the root of every tree's unseen
Leaves are *their marks on faces** and they're green.
The branch declares all that the root's been fed, 2085
Whether candy or poisonous things instead.
And if a root lacks sap to grow leaves, then
How can its branches have leaves, my good men?
Mud seals the root's tongue, so it can't disclose,
But its own branch can tell us what it knows.

Those men apologized in desperation—
Shadows before the moon in full prostration—

For all their rashness, bragging, and conceit,
 Handing the king a sword and winding sheet.
 In shame they started biting their own hands
 And pleading, 'O dear monarch of these lands, 2090
 If you kill us it's lawful, but if you
 Forgive that would be grace and bounty too.
 We've done things that befit us wretchedly—
 O noble king, whatever you decree!
 Brightener of hearts, if you forgive our crime
 You would be true to your ways, too, this time.
 If you forgive, despair would lessen too,
 Otherwise let us all now die for you!
 'I won't forgive or punish,' he replied, 2095
 'No, that's for Ayaz who'll alone decide . . .'

The king transfers to Ayaz the acceptance of the repentance or punishing of the accusers who opened the closet, meaning that this crime was committed against the latter's honour.

'Your crime's aim was his honour and good name;
 You struck the veins of someone none can blame.
 Although we are one spirit, outwardly
 There is no gain or loss in this for me.'
 It doesn't harm the servant's king when he's
 Accused—it just expands his clemencies.
 When He'll make the accused rich like Qarun*
 How much he'll give to innocent men soon!
 Don't think the King won't know the things you do— 2100
 His clemency's all that keeps it from view:
What can then intercede so casually
 Before His knowledge but His clemency?
 His clemency is that sin's actual source
 Or else awe would have stopped the sin of course.
 The blood-price for the murderous self's sin
 Falls on His clemency: it's on the kin.
 Our soul got witlessly drunk just on that,
 His clemency—the devil snatched its hat:
 If clemency's wine hadn't filled the cup
 How could Satan have then shown Adam up? 2105

Adam was for the angels previously
Teacher and coiner of God's currency.
On drinking clemency's wine all the same
He fell from grace due to cursed Satan's game.
The Kind God's teachings, like nutritious food,
Made Adam knowledgeable, sharp and shrewd.
That opium of His awesome clemency
Had led the thief to take his property.
Reason, too, asks His clemency for shelter:
'Please take my hand for you were my cupbearer!'

2110

The king asks Ayaz, 'Decide either to forgive or punish, for whichever you choose between justice or mercy will be correct, and there are advantages in each: there are a thousand mercies within justice, since: "for you there is life in retribution"'. The one who considers retribution abhorrent only regards this single life of the murderer and does not look at the millions of lives of innocent people that will be protected in a fortress due to the fear of punishment.*

'Ayaz, judge now these culprits—you are pure
Through hundreds of abstentions you endure:
If I boil you a hundred times through toiling
I'll find no dregs in foam caused by your boiling.
Most people fear being tested for the shame—
All tests fear being applied to you the same.
With knowledge there are oceans that are endless.
With clemency are mountains that are countless.'
'I know this is your gift,' Ayaz replied,
'I'm just my boots and coat, your grace aside.'
That's why the Prophet once was heard to say:
'Whoever knows himself knows God this way.'
The boots: your sperm; the coat: your blood—the rest
Is His bestowal, friends, and that is best.
He's given you this much so you seek more—
Don't say: 'There's no more than this much in store.'
The gardener shows some apples so you'll see
From them his trees' and their crop's quality.
With wheat ears in his hand the sellers show
Their granary's wheat's worth, so buyers know.

2115

2120

A fine point is explained well by your teacher
 So that you'll tell his knowledge reaches deeper—
 'This is all that he knows!' if you should say,
 Like crumbs on beards he'll sweep you far away.

'Ayaz, come and deal justice—in this nation
 You'll lay for a rare justice the foundation.
 Those criminals should die deservedly,
 But crave your pardon now and clemency,
 To see if mercy dominates or ire, 2125
 Water of Kawsar or the *lahab* fire.'*
 Wrath and clemency's branches have been here
 Since that *Alast* to lead men to that sphere.
 That's why *Alast* has an unusual nature
 As word: it's both confirmer and negater:
 A question that affirms, but equally
 One finds in it the verb for 'not to be'.*
 Leave this unfinished and just plough ahead,
 Don't put elite food on the vulgar's spread.
 His wrath or grace, the plague or the fine breeze— 2130
 Magnets draw iron, amber straw with ease.
 God draws true men to guidance's right way;
 False things draw futile people far astray.
 Sweet stomachs draw sweet things—they're similar;
 Acidic stomachs draw up vinegar.
 Warm rugs remove the cold when used as seat,
 But cold rugs draw away your body's heat.
 When you see a good friend you feel much kindness;
 When you see a vile foe you show much harshness.
 'Ayaz, complete this quickly! Expectation 2135
 Can be itself a harsh retaliation.'

*The king tells Ayaz to hurry up: 'Quickly make the judgement call
 and don't keep them waiting by saying: "Some days must pass for
 our situation to be resolved" for expectation is a red death.'**
Then Ayaz answers the king.

He said, 'It's your choice, king, what shall be done:

The star becomes effaced next to the sun—
Who then are Venus, Mercury, or a meteor
To shine in the sun's presence, their superior?
If I had left my boots and fleece alone,
The seed of blame would not have then been sown:
What was the point of locking up the door
When enviers had suspicions by the score?
Each put his hand in rivers that flowed by 2140
Hoping to find a brick there that was dry—
Can a brick in a river stay dry ever?
Can a fish then defy its water? Never!
They thought that I had shown disloyalty
Though loyalty feels too small next to me.'

About true loyalty I'd have dictated,
But for the irksome uninitiated—
Since most seek doubts and problems over here
We'll talk beyond the surface to be clear.
Break your self and you'll be the kernel only 2145
And hear at last the lovely kernel's story.
The walnut's sound is made by its hard shell—
Do oil and kernel make their sounds as well?
They have a sound, but most ears cannot hear—
That sound is hidden in the mystic's ear.
Were it not for the sweet sound of the kernel
Who'd listen to the walnut shell's mere rattle?
One bears its rattling to make a connection
In silence with the kernel's deep dimension.
Be lipless now and earless for a time, 2150
Then, lip-like, share the drink that is sublime.
You've uttered poetry, prose, and mysteries
Too long—try to be mute for one day, please!

*Story in confirmation of the saying: 'We have tried speech and talk
for such a long time—let's for a little while try self-restraint and silence.'*

You've cooked the bitter, salty, and the sour—
For once try cooking something sweet this hour!

Someone wakes up on Judgement Day to see
 A book in his hand sin-filled totally:
 It's header's black like for a funeral,
 Sins in the text and margins till they're full.
 All of it sin and badness totally 2155
 Like the foes' realm of infidelity.
 A foul and noxious book of that bad kind
 Won't reach the right hand—it heads left you'll find.*
 You have your book too from this world. It's planned,
 But will it reach your left or your right hand?
 Can you know without trying that a boot
 In the shop fits your left or your right foot?
 Know that you're 'left' when you're not right and sound:
 A lion's roar's not like the ape's own sound.
 He who gave roses scent and beauty too, 2160
 Has grace that makes each left thing right and true.
 He gives each left thing rightness, which is better;
 He gives the salty sea some *running water*.*
 Though you're left, try being right when He is near
 To witness that His mercy's rule is clear.
 If the bad deeds' book's passed from left to right
 Would you consider that to be all right?
 How can a book filled with iniquity
 Be fit for the right hand? Please answer me!

*Explanation of a person who talks in one way while his condition is not appropriate with what he says and claims, similar to the infidels referred to in 'And if you ask them: "Who created the heavens and the earth?" They will say, "God."'** *How is worship of a stone idol and sacrifice of life and gold appropriate for a soul which knows that the creator of the heavens and the earth and all creatures is God, The Hearing, The Seeing, The Present, The Observing and The Jealous One, etc.*

There once was an ascetic whose wife would 2165
 Get jealous. His young maid looked very good.
 The wife watched him possessively, forbade
 Him from being left alone with that fine maid.

For some time she observed them closely to
Prevent the chance of trysts between the two,
Until there came God's pre-ordained decree—
The watchman, reason, then faints helplessly.
When His ordainment should arrive, what's reason?

The mighty moon can get eclipsed in season.
The wife once at the bathhouse suddenly 2170

Noticed she'd left her bowl at home, so she
Sent back the maid: 'Go like a bird back there—
Bring here the silver bowl to rinse my hair!'
On hearing this, the maid revived and thought:
'This time I'll get the master whom I've sought:
He's all alone at home now so I can.'

How joyfully back home the young maid ran!
For six years she had longed to be alone
With him like this: the two now on their own.

She flew inside in such a rush and found 2175

The master there with no one else around.
Lust now controlled these lovers and these two
Abandoned caution, left doors open too,
Their bodies writhing as they felt elated,
Their souls united as they copulated.
The wife remembered all her fears just then:
'Why did I send that young maid home again?
I've burned my cloth with my own hands! I am
Letting loose on an ewe the lustful ram.
She rinsed clear quickly both her head and hair 2180
And held her chador as she scampered there.

The maid had run for love, the wife for fear—
The difference between them is so clear.
Each moment mystics travel to God's Throne;
Ascetics move each month one day. It's known
Though the ascetic's day be great and rare
With *fifty thousand years** it can't compare:
In an adept's life one day lasts as long
As fifty thousand years. My words aren't wrong.
Intellects are denied this mystery— 2185

If the mind blows up trying, let it be.
 Next to love, fear is like a hair: so small.
 All things are sacrificed in love's creed. All.
 Love is God's attribute, not fear—God's slave
 Has that along with genitals that crave.
 Since you've read '*they love Him*'* in the Qur'an
 Joined with '*He loves them*'* that means that you can
 See that love and most passionate love, not fear,
 Are both God's attributes as day is clear.
 God's attributes and clay's are obviously 2190
 So different: One Pure, one temporary.
 If I describe love non-stop to you, friend,
 Come Judgement Day my words would still not end:
 Judgement Day has a date and definition;
 God's attribute has no kind of restriction.
 Love has five hundred wings and each extends
 From God's High Throne to where the earth's depth ends.
 While the ascetic walks across in fear
 God's lover flies as fast as wind through here.
 The fearful can't catch lovers who fly by 2195
 And whose ache makes a carpet of the sky.
 Unless God's Light's grace tells them suddenly:
 'From this world and from travel now be free!'
 Flee from your own fuss and your scurrying—
 Only the falcon finds paths to the king.
 Predestination and free will hold you,
 But God's pull comes from far beyond these two.

The wife reached home and opened the front door.
 They heard it open while still on the floor.
 The maid jumped up dishevelled once aware; 2200
 The man stood up to start his daily prayer.
 The wife saw that the maid was so dishevelled,
 Confused, beside herself, and very rattled.
 She saw her husband standing up in prayer,
 But grew suspicious of commotion there—
 She lifted up his shirt tail with good reason
 And saw his balls and penis smeared with semen.

Semen dripped from his penis to the floor,
His knees and thighs still dirty from before.
She slapped him on the head, 'Vile wretch, you're saying 2205
That these are testicles of one who's praying?
That these thighs, penis, and this pubic hair
Are also worthy of doing *zeker* and prayer?'
Be honest, is a book that's full of spite,
Oppression and wrong-doing fit for the right?*'
If you ask infidels, 'Who's the creator
Of this world and the sky and every creature?'
He'll say, 'God's the Creator from on high,
To whom all of His creatures testify.'
Do this man's unbelief, sin, and oppression 2210
Make him fit for such a sincere confession?
And are notorious and corrupt acts fit
And totally compatible with it?
His actions make his speech a lie, my brother,
So he is fit now for the dreaded torture.

On the Last Day each hidden thing is shown,
Each sinner is then by himself made known:
His hands and feet will give clear evidence
Of his corruption to His Eminence.
The hand will say, 'I stole this and that thing.' 2215
The lips, 'I was forever questioning.'
The foot, 'I've followed lusts until they're sated.'
His genitals will say, 'I've fornicated.'
His eyes, 'I've flirted inappropriately.'
His ears, 'I've kept words of iniquity.'
He's then a lie from head down to his toe
And his own limbs make sure that we all know,
Just as those prayers that seem fine spectacles
Are false pretence as shown by testicles.
So act in such a way that yours will say 2220
Without a tongue, '*I testify*,'* this way.
So your whole body, every limb, will say:
'*I testify*'* and do so come what may.

It's proof when servants walk behind their master:

'He is my master; I fulfil his order.'

If you have blotted your life's book, act fast—

Repent for all that you did in the past!

Its root is now, though those days may be over—

If it lacks moisture, give contrition's water!

Give Water of Life to your life's root—nourish

2225

That tree of your life, watch it bloom and flourish!

Through this, all the past things are made good now

And poison turns to sugar too somehow:

God has transformed your evil deeds to good,

All are now deemed obedience as they should.

Cling to sincere repentance as your goal—

Mister, strive hard with body and with soul!

Heed me about repentance that is true—

You once believed it—now believe anew!

Story explaining the repentance of Nasuh, for just as milk that flows out of nipples does not wish to return, whoever repents as sincerely as Nasuh never recalls that sin of theirs with desire, but rather with each passing moment his loathing increases. This loathing is proof that he has tasted the delight of acceptance.

That first craving has lost its appeal and this new delight has taken its place:

Only new love replaces an old one.

Why not seek out a better looking one?

But if his heart desires that sin again, this is a sign that he hadn't tasted the delight of acceptance and so such a delight did not take the place of that delight from the sin, and he has not become among those whom 'we will give ease', but rather the delight has remained with him which leads to 'we will give him hardship'.**

There was a man once called Nasuh and he

2230

Worked washing women's hair, unusually.

His face was like a woman's and he'd hide

The fact he really was a man inside.

He kept shampooing them though that was odd,

Since he was cunning in deceit and fraud.

He washed their hair for years and none suspected

His secret, so his sex went undetected,
 Since both his face and voice were so effete,
 Although his much-aroused lusts were complete.
 He wore the chador and the veil, but he 2235
 Was in male youth's prime, lustful as can be.
 He would massage and wash princesses' hair
 So he was thrilled that he was working there.
 He'd vowed repentance earlier than this—
 His infidel soul broke his promises.
 That sinner asked a mystic who passed near:
 'Remember me in your pure prayers, my dear!'
 That liberated man knew of his secret,
 But, like God's kind ways, chose not to reveal it,
 In his heart secrets, but his lips both sealed, 2240
 Silent with voices in his heart concealed.
 The mystics who have downed God's cup have known
 The secrets, but by them they're never shown.
 He who's been taught the secrets out of sight
 Was then sealed closed with his own mouth sewn tight.
 He just laughed, 'Naughty one, may God grant you
 Repentance for the things you know you do!'

Explaining that the prayer of the mystic who has reached God and his petition to God are like the petition of God to Himself, for He has said: 'I am the hearing, sight, tongue, and hand' and also: 'You did not throw when you threw, but rather God threw.'* The Qur'anic verses, prophetic traditions, and other sayings about this are numerous. An explanation of the reason God makes it happen that, while his ear is yanked, the sinner is brought to the repentance of Nasuh.*

Rising above, that mystic's supplication
 Transformed to good that wretch's situation
 Because his prayer is not like any prayer— 2245
 He is effaced; his words are God's. That's rare.
 When God asks from Himself and begs this way
 How can He turn that prayer down anyway?
 The means came from the Lord's own fabrication
 To free Nasuh from much woe and damnation:

While he was filling up a bowl with water
A jewel belonging to the king's own daughter
Was lost, one from her earring. All around
Women were searching so it would be found.
They locked the bathhouse door then suddenly 2250
And checked the furniture most thoroughly.
It didn't turn up in the furniture
And they'd not found the jewel's pilferer.
They then searched there with utmost seriousness
Inside mouths, ears, and every orifice.
They searched in all their crevices as well
For that pearl that belonged to a fine shell:
'Everyone now get naked,' they were told,
'Whether you're young or whether you are old!'
The chamberlain searched everyone around 2255
In turn to make sure that the pearl was found.
In fear, Nasuh went somewhere out of view,
His cheeks pale, and, from terror, his lips blue.
He saw his death ahead of him and he
Trembled just like a leaf, so fearfully,
And prayed, 'I've turned back often up to now
And broken every promise, every vow—
Lord, I've behaved as I am suited to
And so a black flood has arrived here too.
If my turn to be searched arrives, You know 2260
How I will suffer then more grief and woe!
A hundred sparks have struck my heart today—
You can now smell my heart burn when I pray.
May infidels not feel such agony!
I grab now mercy's coattails—rescue me!
O mother, why did you give birth to me?
I wish a lion had just eaten me!
O God, do what is fit for Your own role—
A snake is biting me from every hole!
I clearly have an inert soul and heart 2265
Or they'd have turned to blood now for a start.
There's little time left now for me to flee—
Be like the King You are and rescue me!
If you'd conceal me this once, I implore,

I will repent for all I've done before.
 Accept repentance from me once again—
 I'll truly strive hard in contrition then.
 If I'm at fault again a later day
 Don't ever listen to me when I pray!
 A hundred drops flowed as he wept in dread: 2270
 'I'm in the executioner's hands!' he said.
 'I hope no infidel must die like me
 Or unbelievers feel such misery!
 He mourned his own soul as if it were dead
 Since he saw Azrael approach ahead.
 'O God!' he cried so often that the wall
 And door of that room joined in with his call.
 He was immersed in crying, 'O Lord!' when
 He heard shouts from the searching crowd again . . .

The arrival of Nasuh's turn to be searched and the call: 'We've searched everyone else. Search Nasuh!' Nasuh's fainting through fear and the release of his bind after the extremity of it was reached, as the Prophet would say whenever illness or worry overwhelmed him: 'Distress, become severe! You will ease off.'

'We've searched the rest. Come here, Nasuh!' they said. 2275
 He fainted, lifeless as if truly dead.
 He fell down like a broken wall. His mind
 Had gone—what was inert was left behind.
 His wits departed from his body then;
 His soul now joined with God above again:
 Once void of his existence in this fashion
 God summoned to Himself Nasuh's soul's falcon.
 His ship capsized before it reached its goal,
 But he reached Mercy's coastline through his soul.
 His soul joined God when he became unconscious; 2280
 Mercy's wave started surging then, tumultuous.
 His soul escaped the body's trap's disgrace
 And happily went to its original place.
 His soul, a falcon in the body's fetter,
 Was broken-winged, foot-bound, trapped by the latter—
 On losing consciousness with feet unbound

The falcon flew to the best king around.
 When Mercy's oceans stir to life anew
 Mere stones can drink the Water of Life too;
 A tiny mote grows big and bold instead; 2285
 A dirty rug becomes silk with gold thread;
 An ancient corpse will leave the grave; for beauty
 The devil's now the envy of the houri,
 The ground turns verdant, lush and bountiful;
 Dry wood sprouts buds and turns so beautiful;
 The wolf becomes the lamb's friend; the despairing
 Become now hopeful, positive and daring.

*The finding of the pearl and how the chamberlains and handmaids
of the Princess asked Nasuh to forgive them.*

After that soul-destroying, awful fear
 Came the good news: 'The item lost is here!'
 A clamour suddenly rose: 'Fear has passed— 2290
 The single lost pearl has been found at last.
 It's been found and we're so exhilarated—
 Give the reward for good news being related!'
 The bathhouse filled with clamour, shouts, claps too,
For sorrow had now disappeared from view.
 Nasuh returned now to his wits once more;
 His eyes saw brightness like days by the score.
 Everyone now was asking his forgiveness
 And reaching for his hand to shower with kisses:
 'Forgive us! We had such bad thoughts tonight 2295
 And once we'd talked we started to back-bite.'
 They were suspicious of him most of all
 For he was closest to her of them all:
 The princess's shampooer was his role;
 The pair were close—two bodies with one soul.
 They'd thought: 'Only Nasuh is capable;
 From the princess he is inseparable.'
 She'd wanted first to search him using force.
 Out of respect she let it take its course
 So he might place it somewhere clear as day 2300
 And save himself thus during the delay.

They kept on asking him for his forgiveness;
Requests from them to be excused were countless.
‘It was the Grace of God, the Just, instead,
Otherwise I am worse than what’s being said.
Why should you ask a sinner to forgive
When I’m the biggest sinner who did live?
The bad they’ve said of me is just a bit
Of its true total, though you’re doubting it.
Others know just a bit of me—they know 2305
One thousandth of my sins that are so low.
I know and so does He who keeps me covered
My sins and vile deeds, though you’ve not discovered.
At first a Satan-like one was my teacher,
But soon in evil he was my inferior.
God saw this, but He made it all unseen
To spare me from disgrace if it were seen.
God’s Mercy stitched my old fleece waistcoat’s holes
And gave atonement sweeter than pure souls.
He undid all the evil I’d committed; 2310
He marked as “done” obedience I’d omitted.
He freed me like the cypress and the lily,
And like good fortune he has spoilt me silly.
Amongst the pure souls’ list He wrote my name;
I fit hell—He gave heaven all the same.
I sighed and then my sigh became a rope—
That was hung down my well to offer hope:
I grabbed that rope and managed to get out;
I then became so joyful, fair and stout.
I’d been at the well’s bottom, feeling low— 2315
The world’s not big enough for me now though.
All praises be to You, God, Your relief
Arrived and rescued me from so much grief.
If every hair of mine could speak to You
They couldn’t give the total praise that’s due.
I yell to people in this garden, “Oh,
If only my own people would now know!”’*

The princess again invites Nasuh to shampoo her after his repentance had been established and accepted, but he makes an excuse and turns her down.

Afterwards someone came to him to say:
 'The Sultan's daughter summons you today.
 The ruler's daughter is inviting you— 2320
 Come now to wash her hair without ado!
 Her heart wants you alone to wash her hair
 And to massage and scrub her everywhere.'
 He said, 'Begone! My hand's out of commission.
 Nasuh's too sick now for this kind of mission.
 Find someone else as fast as possible!
 I swear my hand is not available.'
 He thought, 'My sin was the excessive kind—
 How can that fear and anguish leave my mind?
 I died once and returned from that no less. 2325
 I tasted bitter death and nothingness.
 But I repented truly to God—I
 Won't break my vow again until I die.
 Only a donkey would go back once more
 To where he had faced horrors once before.'

Story explaining how someone repents and feels remorse, but forgets that feeling and tries again what he did before. He falls into eternal perdition. When his repentance lacks firmness, strength, sweetness, and acceptability it is like a rootless tree and each day it becomes more yellow and dry. We take refuge in God from that.

A bleacher had a donkey that was ill
 With back sores, empty stomach, starving still,
 Confined to grassless, stony ground—no hay,
 Nor shelter for this donkey night and day.
 Nothing but water there to ease its plight, 2330
 The donkey was stuck there all day and night.
 There was a reed marsh and a forest near—
 A lion skilled in hunting without peer
 Lived there and once it fought an elephant
 And then got so hurt that it couldn't hunt.

It couldn't hunt due to an injury—
Other beasts lost their food source suddenly
For they'd eat what that lion left behind:
Once it was wounded their food, too, declined.
The lion told a fox, 'Go out for me 2335
And hunt a donkey very rapidly!
If you find one now grazing in the meadow,
Charm him, fool him, bring him back here, good fellow!
Once I gain strength from donkey flesh, I'll then
Be able to go hunting prey again.
I'll eat a little, leaving most for you:
I am the reason you get your food too,
So find for me a donkey or a cow
And charm it with your spells as you know how.
With your sweet words and charm make it soon lose 2340
Its mind, then bring it home with a smart ruse.'

Parable about the Spiritual Pole, who is the mystic in union with God, with regard to his giving to people their nourishment of forgiveness and mercy to the degree that God inspires him to. Also, a comparison with the lion, for the other beasts eat portions of his food and his leftovers in proportion to their nearness to him, not spatial nearness but nearness in characteristics. The nuances of this are many. God is the guide.

The Pole's the lion—hunting's the job he does.
His leftovers are for the rest of us.
Try satisfying him with all your might
So he gains strength and hunts wild prey in sight.
Men won't get food if he endures some pain:
The gullet's food arrives due to the brain.
Men's ecstasies are what he's left behind,
So if your hearts want prey, keep this in mind.
People are bodily limbs—that is their role— 2345
He's mind and body's under mind's control.
The Pole's wound's bodily, not in spirit, friend.
The ark was flawed, not Noah, in the end.
The Pole will turn around himself, but he
Is what the heavens circle ceaselessly.

Help him repair the ark if you become
 His special servant and much gain will come—
 Your help is not for him, but you instead:
*'If you help God, you'll be helped,'** God has said.
 Hunt like the fox and give him all you find 2350
 So you'll gain from him thousands more in kind.
 Just like the fox, disciples give their prey;
 Stubborn hyenas hunt the dead all day.
 Take dead things to him and they'll come alive:
 Dirt in a garden will make all things thrive.

The fox said to the lion, 'I'll serve you:
 I'll trick and rob it of its mind now too.
 My work is charming with tricks anyway—
 It is my job to trick and lead astray.'
 It rushed down from the mountain near the river 2355
 To find the poor, thin donkey and deliver
 A friendly greeting. That sly fox went near
 The simple, poor beast, when it felt no fear:
 'How come you're in this parched land that's so hot
 Among the stones in such a dried-up spot?'
 'Whether in heaven or a state that's hateful
 God has decreed my fate, so I am grateful.
 I thank God, my Beloved, in all states,
 Good or bad, since there are more awful fates.
 Complaining's unbelief when He's decreed. 2360
 Patience, *the key to gifts*, is what we need.
 God is the Friend; others are foes. How could
 Complaining of one's friend to foes be good?
 If He gives buttermilk, I won't complain
 That it's not honey: there's pain with each gain.'

Story about the donkey of the firewood seller seeing Arab horses with provisions in a royal stable and wishing to win the same good fortune, to teach that one should not wish for anything but forgiveness, guidance, and God's blessing, for though you have a hundred kinds of suffering, when you have the savour of forgiveness everything becomes sweet. Moreover, every fortune that you wish for before you've ever experienced it is accompanied by a suffering that you don't see, just as inside every trap the grain is visible while the snare is hidden—when you are stuck in one trap you wish: 'If only I had taken the other bait!' imagining that those grains did not have snares.*

A water-carrier's donkey was becoming
 Bent-double like a circle due to suffering.
 Heavy loads gave its back sores tragically;
 It longed for its own death so passionately.
 What's barley? It did not get straw to fill 2365
 Itself, just blows from iron goads when still.
 The royal stable's master once felt sorry
 Because he knew the owner of this donkey.
 He greeted him, asked how he was, then he
 Asked why the donkey's back hunched like a C?
 'Due to my poverty,' came the reply,
 'This sealed-mouthed beast gets nothing. That is why.'
 'Give it to me for a few days and then
 At the king's stable it will thrive again.'
 He gave his donkey to him—he was able 2370
 To kindly keep it in the ruler's stable.
 The donkey saw there Arab horses, sated
 With food, fat, lovely, and rejuvenated,
 Their ground swept, water sprinkled on it too,
 Barley and straw arriving there when due.
 The horses were all combed and rubbed down there—
 It raised its muzzle: 'Glorious Lord, up there!
 Aren't I your creature, too, though I've a lack,
 A wretched donkey with sores on its back?
 Back pain and hunger every night make me 2375
 Wish for my sudden death continually.

Those horses are doing well with food supplied—
For suffering grief why was I specified?’

The call to work was heard once suddenly—
The horses had to work with bravery.
They got struck by the enemies outside,
Whose arrows’ barbs pierced them on every side,
The horses got back from the war once able—
They all collapsed on their backs in the stable.
Their legs were tightly bandaged where they lay, 2380
The farriers stood there waiting, too, that day.
Scalpels were used to pierce them to take out
The barbs from their wounds, painfully no doubt.
The watching donkey said, ‘O God!’ on seeing,
‘I don’t mind being poor when I’ve well-being:
I don’t care for that food, nor wounds—it’s clear
Those wishing for well-being quit this world here.’

*The fox disapproves of the saying of the donkey:
‘I am content with my portion.’*

The fox said, ‘Lawful work you do for pay
Is necessary to show you obey:
Nothing’s without means in this world, you see. 2385
That’s why to seek your food is necessary.’
‘*Seek out God’s bounty!*’* is one of God’s orders
Lest someone seize the property of others.
‘The door’s shut to provisions,’ said the Prophet,
‘Young man, and there are several big locks on it.
Our movement, work to earn and our exertion
Are keys for those locks and to draw the curtain.
The door won’t open without keys that fit;
God won’t give food without you seeking it.’

The donkey answers the fox.

‘That’s just a lack of trust,’ the donkey said, 2390
‘He who gave life will also give you bread.’

Whoever seeks success, dominion
Will not lack loaves of bread at all, my son.
Wild animals all feed on what God offers
And they don't earn, nor do they care for others.
God the Provider gives all daily bread:
He sets their lot before each. All are fed.
Daily bread comes to all who have true patience;
Struggles of efforts all stem from impatience.'

The fox answers the donkey.

'That kind of faith is rare,' the fox replied, 2395
'Few have such massive trust in God inside.
It's ignorant to focus on what's rare:
The royal path's not for all everywhere.
The Prophet said, "Contentment's hidden treasure"—
Not all can find what's hidden at their leisure.
Know your own limit and don't you exceed this!
You won't fall into suffering if you heed this.'

The donkey answers the fox.

'What you claim is the opposite of trust—
Suffering comes to the spirit from your lust. 2400
Due to contentment no one's perishing;
By means of lust no one became a king.
Food's not kept back from pigs and dogs, so learn
That clouds and rain are not things men can earn.
And just as you long for your food each day
Your food longs for its eater the same way.'

Exposition of the meaning of trust in God by means of the story about the ascetic who, as a test for his trust in God, left his hometown and his belongings and went far away from the thoroughfares others frequented to the foot of a remote and abandoned mountain. In extreme hunger he slept with a rock as pillow, saying: 'I have trusted in You to provide the means and my daily bread by cutting myself off from other means—all in order to experience the means provided by trust in God.'

A hermit heard Mohammad's famed tradition:

'Daily bread comes from God as soul's provision.

It doesn't matter what you wish or do—

Your daily bread runs lovingly to you.'

To test this, the ascetic rushed outside

2405

Through wild plains and slept on a mountainside:

'I'll see if daily bread arrives,' he said,

'To strengthen all my views on daily bread.'

A caravan had lost its way near there—

They saw him lying still and unaware.

One said, 'How come a naked man's out here

In the wild where no town nor roads are near?

Amazing! Is he dead or breathing? He

Does not fear wild wolves or his enemy.'

They then came near him and they started touching—

2410

On purpose that man lay still and said nothing.

He didn't even move his head throughout,

Nor opened his eyes, eager to find out.

'This weak and hopeless man', the people said,

'Has had a stroke because he was unfed.'

They brought some bread and pots of food, so they

Could force it down his gullet in some way,

And so that man then clenched his teeth to then

Put to the test that promise once again.

They pitied him, 'This man is starving badly

2415

And might soon die because of hunger, sadly.'

They rushed to bring a knife to force some gaps

Between his clenched teeth for some food perhaps—

They poured some soup inside eventually

And pushed in bits of bread most carefully.

‘O heart, though you keep cool,’ the hermit said,
 ‘You know the secret, yet stay calm instead!’
 ‘I know and it’s deliberate,’ it then said,
 ‘Body and soul by God are both well fed.’
 Could there have been a stricter test than this? 2420
 Daily bread heads to patient men with bliss.

The fox answers the donkey and urges the donkey to earn a living.

The fox said, ‘Leave these tales of yours for good—
 With *struggles of men with less* earn some food!
 God gave you hands, so do some work instead—
 Earn something, help your friends earn daily bread!
 Everyone’s meant to earn, including you,
 And to help other people earn some too.
 Earning’s not just one person’s burden either:
 We’ve many jobs, like carpenter and weaver.
 The world’s maintained by our cooperation; 2425
 All choose to work through fear of deprivation.
 Free-loading isn’t right—the Prophet’s way
 Is to earn your provisions every day.’

The donkey answers the fox: ‘Trust in God is the best of ways to earn, for everyone needs trust in God and says, “O God, make this situation of mine turn out right!” and supplication involves trust in God. Trust in God is a means of earning that doesn’t need any other means of earning etc.’

The donkey said, ‘So far I’m not aware
 Of earning rivalling such trust anywhere:
 To praising God there’s nothing that comes near
 For drawing daily bread to us down here.’
 This argument between the pair dragged on
 Until all questions and replies were done.
 The fox then said, ‘Know that in His dominion 2430
 There is “Don’t harm yourself”* as prohibition.
 Patience with arid deserts, stony ground
 Is stupid. God’s world’s vast. Just look around.
 Move your home to the pasture now from here!
 Graze there near a sweet river without fear,

Green pastures just like paradise, a taste
 Of what that's like with grass up to your waist.
 Happy the animals who go there too.
 Such tall grass hides the camel from your view.
 Flowing fountains are there on every side; 2435
 It's calm and safe for animals inside.'
 The donkey, being an ass, did not then say:
 'How come you're now in such an awful way?
 Where is the plumpness, pomp, and drunkenness?
 Why is your body thin and in a mess?
 If your description of it isn't lies
 Then why can't I see stupor in your eyes?
 Those eyes that beg and lack a true, prior vision
 Are caused by neediness and not dominion.
 If you've come from the fountain, why're you dry? 2440
 You claim you're musk, but there's no scent. You lie!
 Why isn't there on you the smallest sign
 Of what you boast about now and opine?'

*Parable of the camel to explain that if you don't see a sign of glory
 in someone who tells of good fortune, it is time to suspect
 that he is just pretending.*

A man once asked a camel, 'Where are you
 Coming from, you whom fortune follows too?'
 It said, 'The hot baths that are close to you.'
 He said, 'Your dirty knees show that's not true!'
 Stubborn Pharaoh saw Moses's snake,* then
 Begged for respite and mellowed down again.
 'He's judgement's lord,' said certain clever men, 2445
 'So he should really have been harsher then.
 Whether a snake or dragon marvel, where
 Was his divine wrath and his prideful air?
 If he is the supreme lord on his throne
 Why all this flattery for a worm alone?'

As long as your soul lusts for sweets and wine
 Know that your soul's not seen food that's divine:

That vision of God's Light's profound effusion's
Your severance from the realm of fake delusions.
 Since that bird goes to briny water, it
 Has not yet seen sweet water's benefit—
 Its faith is imitations of a trace;
 Its soul has never even seen faith's face.
 There is great danger for the imitator
 From the accursed devil, that waylayer.
 On seeing God's Light, he becomes secure,
 At peace from doubt's annoyances and sure.
 Until the sea waves' foam laps on the shore,
 Its source, it keeps on clashing more and more:
 That foam's of earth; in water it's exiled
 And while kept separate it becomes so riled.
 When his eyes open he can read the plan—
 The devil can't control now such a man.

Although the donkey told the secret, he
 Like copiers, did so just externally.
 He had no ship, though he was praising water:
 He ripped his shirt, but he was not a lover.
 False hypocrites' excuses are rejected
 Since they're not from the heart, but just affected:
 They have the apple's scent, but no real share;
 The scent on him is just to reach you there.
 A woman's charge won't break ranks in the fray—
 It only makes her state worse in that way.
 You see her lion-like with sword in hand
 In battle, but look at that trembling hand!
 Pity the one whose intellect is female
 While his vile self is both aroused and deemed male:
 His reason's overwhelmed inevitably—
 He's heading to loss and catastrophe.
 Happy the one whose intellect is male,
 His vile self female, vulnerable and frail:
 Particular intellects, male and prevailing,
 Seize female carnal souls and leave them flailing.
 The female's battle charge looks bold, but she

Shares that poor donkey's asininity.
 Animal qualities prevail in them—
 They're drawn to scent and colour in this realm:
 A donkey heard of those two in the pasture
 And rational proofs evaded him thereafter
 There were no clouds but thirsty men sought rain— 2470
 The hungry self lacked patience to restrain.
 Patience is like an iron shield, my friend—
 God wrote there '*Victory comes*' for that's its end.
 The imitator's store of evidence
 Comes from his mind, not from experience:
 He's musk-smeared, not real musk: he smells of it,
 But in reality he's only shit.
 For shit to turn to musk one must graze long,
 Disciple, in that garden for the strong.
 Don't eat, like donkeys, hay and barley here— 2475
 Eat Judas Tree flowers like the Khotan deer!
 Graze only on fine jasmine, cloves, and rose—
 Go to Khotan's plains with a man who knows!
 And get your belly used to herbs to gain
 The knowledge the apostles can obtain.
 Quit eating straw and barley and then you
 Can fill your belly with such fine herbs too!
 The bodily belly drags to mounds of hay,
 But the heart's belly leads to basil's way.
 Eat hay and barley and they'll slaughter you; 2480
 Eat God's Light and then be Qur'an-like too!
 You are half-musk and half-dung, so beware!
 Don't raise the dung's share, but the musk's in there!
 The imitator may have proofs to show,
 But he has no soul, so how could he know?
 When speakers have no soul or greatness now
 How can their speech bear leaves and fruit somehow?
 He confidently tells men of the way,
 But shakes within more than a blade of hay.
 Although he uses wondrous words to teach 2485
 There is as well a tremor in his speech.

*The difference between the call of the perfect shaikh who is united
with God and the talk of the defective ones whose virtues are
acquired and hollow.*

Enlightened shaikhs show true paths when they teach

And they make Light accompany their speech.

Strive to become drunk and enlightened too,

So His Light joins with all words said by you!

If something's boiled in grape juice, then that flavour

Will stay with it when it is tasted later,

Whether quince, carrots, walnuts, or an apple—

You'll find grape juice's taste in any sample.

When knowledge is immersed in Light, no less,

2490

Men see its Light despite their stubbornness:

Whatever you say will be luminous—

The sky pours only pure rain over us.

Become sky, cloud—pour rain down here today!

The drainpipe pours, but not in a pure way:

The drainpipe's water's borrowed patently—

Water's innate in clouds and in the sea:

The drainpipe stands for thought and contemplation;

The clouds and sky both stand for revelation.

Rainwater makes a garden bloom with colour;

2495

The drainpipe starts a quarrel with your neighbour.

The donkey argued with the fox some more,

An imitator, that fox wiped the floor

With it, for it lacked visionary perceptions—

The fox's babble gave it palpitations.

The donkey had, through lust for food, grown base

So it caved in though it knew a strong case.

The story about that male whore and the question he was asked by a sodomite while he was bugging him: 'What is that dagger for?'

He said, 'It's so I can tear open the belly of anyone who thinks bad thoughts about me.' The sodomite satisfied his lusts with him and then said, 'Thank God that I don't have any bad thoughts about you!'

My house is not a house; it's a whole region.

My joke is not a joke; it is a teaching.

A sodomite took a male whore with him

Back home, then made him bend and bugged him.

That wretch then saw the male whore had a dagger: 2500

'What's tied around your waist in that strange manner?'

That's there in case a wretched man thinks badly

To harm me, so I can rip out his belly.'

The sodomite said, 'Thank God that it's true

That I'd no thought of doing harm to you.'

No manliness, so why bring knives to slit?

Without heart, helmets have no benefit.

You've been bequeathed the famed sword of Ali,*

But do you have God's Lion's arm? Show me!

You may know spells of Jesus, but do you, 2505

Vile man, have Jesus's divine mouth too?

You have just made an ark through a donation,

But where is one like Noah to be captain?

Like Abraham you smashed some idols, yes,

But would you jump in fire without distress?*

If you've proof, show by action—when at war

Transform your wooden sword to Zo'l-feqar!*

What stops you acting to prove you're no faker

Is actually the vengeance of your Maker.

You've made those who had feared the path turn bold, 2510

Though more than others you shake and feel cold.

You preach about being patient everywhere,

But slit the veins of gnats you cannot bear.

Eunuch, standing as if prepared to die

In front of troops, your penis proves you lie—

With lack of manliness within, you actor,

Your beard and moustache only lead to laughter.

Repent, shed tears like rain, redeem your beard
And moustache from the laughter you had feared.
Through action take the cure for manliness 2515
To then be Aries's hot sun, no less.
Leave now your belly, move towards your heart,
So God greets you without veil, then don't part.
Step forward and try hard to persevere
Then love will pull you closer by your ear.

*The fox's trick overwhelms the donkey's wish to remain pure and
with self-restraint, leading it to the lion in the jungle.*

The fox tried his tricks and he persevered—
He dragged the simple donkey by the beard.
Where is the khaniqah's musician, son?
Let him play drums and sing: 'The ass has gone!'
A hare can lead a lion down a well,* 2520
So foxes can make donkeys graze as well.
Close your ears to the people's spells except
Those from the Friend of God, the true adept.
That spell of his beats halva, for it's sweeter—
A hundred halvass are his spell's inferior.
Royal jars filled with wine up to the brim,
Took their stock from those wine-stained lips on him.
Only the souls remote from the divine
Love other wines and not just his lips' wine.
Blind birds can't see sweet water—it's no wonder 2525
That they keep circling round the briny water.
Breasts split from spiritual Moses's sheer might,
Like Sinai, and blind parrots gain their sight.*
The drum's been banged by Khosraw, Shirin's lover—
Sugar's price has plunged lower, it's no wonder.*
Josephs of the Unseen now lead troops near—
They're bringing sacks of sugar over here.
Egyptian camels face our way as well—
Listen now parrots to their ringing bell!
Our town will fill with sugar in a day— 2530
Sugar's low price will plunge more in that way.
Wallow in sugar as the parrots do,

Candy lovers, ignore the bitter few!
 Pound sugar cane! This is good work to do.
 Fling your soul to the Sole Beloved too!
 No bitter one remains now in our town
 Since Shirin has now seated Khosraw down.
 So many sweets, so much wine—it is awesome!
 Shout from the minaret a general welcome!
 So sweet will be the vinegar, though old! 2535
 Mere stones will turn to rubies and to gold!
 The sun is clapping from the sky above;
 Dust specks are frolicking like those in love.
 The garden has made eyes drunk: blossoms now
 Are budding beautifully on every bough.
 The eye of fortune's working wondrous magic;
 The soul says 'I'm God' like Mansur, ecstatic.*
 If a fox kills a donkey, don't you worry!
 You won't be harmed since you are not a donkey.

Story about a person who flung himself terrified into a house, with pale cheeks and lips as blue as indigo, and with hands shaking like leaves on a tree. The owner of the house asked, 'What's going on?' He answered, 'Outside they are confiscating donkeys.' The owner said, 'Congratulations! They are seizing donkeys, but you are not one. Why are you scared?' He said, 'They are taking them with such zeal that they've lost discernment. I fear that today they might take me for a donkey.'

A man took refuge in a house at pace. 2540
 His lips were blue on a pale yellow face.
 The house's owner asked, 'Are you okay?'
 Your hands shake like an old man's—why today?
 What happened? Why do you flee here, dear fellow,
 And how did your complexion turn so yellow?'
 'They're seizing donkeys out there now,' he said,
 'To be used by that nasty king instead.'
 'My friend, they're taking donkeys—you're not one
 So why are you so worried now? Begone!'
 'They are so serious and they seize them quickly— 2545
 They might mistake me also for a donkey:

They are so busy seizing them that they
Might have lost all discernment in this way.'

When one without discernment is the emperor
They'll seize the donkey's owner then in error.
Our city's King won't take without perceiving:
He has discernment; He is Hearing, Seeing.
Be valiant, don't fear donkey seizers here—
You're not a donkey, Jesus. Do not fear!
Your light fills the fourth heaven—God won't let 2550
Your own abode be a mere stable yet.
Though in a stable now for something, you
Are loftier than the stars and heavens too.
The stable-master's not a donkey, is he?
Not everyone inside is one, you will see.

Why are we hung up on the donkey now?
Tell of the flowers and rosegarden somehow!
Pomegranate, apple, and the orange trees,
Wine and so many fair ones who will please,
That sea whose waves are pearls, such pearls that can 2555
Speak up and see things just like any man,
Or birds that pick fine roses and then lay
Silver and golden eggs in their own way,
Or falcons nurturing partridges which fly
Upside down on their backs up in the sky!
The world has hidden ladders one can seek
And they lead rung by rung to heaven's peak.
Each party has a ladder that is different
And each path has a heaven that is different—
No one knows of the other's state of heart. 2560
That realm's expansive without end or start.
One is stunned by the other and he says:
'Why is he happy? What's here to amaze?'
God's earth's broad and expansive all around;
Each tree grows from a different patch of ground.
The leaves and branches give thanks and applaud:
'What a realm! It's expansive and so broad.'

Around the blossom nightingales are gathering:
 'Give us some of the food that you are having!'

Go back now to the fox and pain and hunger 2565
 That lion felt—this talk could stretch much longer.

The fox takes the donkey to the lion, but the donkey jumps away from the lion. The fox reproaches the lion: 'The donkey was still far away. You were too hasty.' The lion makes excuses and begs the fox: 'Go and trick him again!'

When the fox brought the donkey up the slope
 So it could be killed easily and not cope,
 While still far from the lion at some distance
 That lion couldn't wait more in this instance—
 It leapt down from a higher point, but lacked
 The strength to catch its prey when it attacked.

The donkey saw it from afar and fled
 To the hill's bottom, panicked, full of dread.
 'O king,' the fox said to the lion, 'Why 2570
 Could you not wait for it to come nearby

So that lost one would be so close to you
 That you could easily overpower it too?
 Haste is the trap of Satan—in its place
 Patience and planning are the Merciful's Grace.

The donkey saw from far off you'd attack—
 You've shown your weakness now and what you lack.'
 'I thought I had my strength,' the lion said,
 'I didn't know I was so weak instead.

My hunger's so extreme in consequence 2575
 I've lost my patience and intelligence.

Could you please once again through cleverness
 Bring back that donkey to me nonetheless?
 I'd be indebted. Try hard—you might still
 Succeed in luring it back with your skill.'

The fox said, 'Okay, with God's help to bind
 A seal upon its heart to make it blind
 So it forgets the terror it did see—
 This might work due to asininity.

But when I bring it back don't rush out then 2580

And, due to too much haste, lose it again!
 The lion said, 'I've learnt now from before
 My body's weak; I'm injured and so sore.
 I won't move till the donkey nears this clearing
 And I'll stay still here as if I am sleeping.'
 The fox left, saying: 'King, pray ignorance
 Has veiled the donkey's own intelligence!
 It has made vows to its God and Creator
 Not to be duped by any wretched faker—
 We'll make it break its vows through trickery; 2585
 We're foes of vows and wisdom's way, aren't we?
 The donkey's head's our children's ball; its mind
 Is just a toy for trickery of our kind.'
 Reason that Saturn's orbit can affect
 Is lost near Universal Intellect.
 Saturn and Mercury have made it knowing;
 Ours is from the Creator who's bestowing.
 'He taught Man'* is His special signature.
 'The knowledge is with God'* we're aiming for.
 We have been nurtured by that Radiant Sun— 2590
 That's why we pray: 'My Lord, the Most High One!'
 'Although the donkey had a bad experience
 Hundreds of them lose to my interference.
 That weak-willed one might yet break its own vow,
 And breaking vows' misfortune reach it now.'

*Explaining that breaking a covenant or vow of repentance is the
 cause of affliction, or rather it is the cause of transformation as in
 the case of 'the companions of the Sabbath'* and 'the companions of
 Jesus's table spread'.* He made them apes and swine.* In this
 community there is transformation of the heart and at the
 Resurrection the body will be given the form of the heart.
 We take refuge in God.*

To break a vow or pact means that you'll be
 The victim of its curse eventually.
 The Sabbath group broke their vows and this meant
 Hatred, change for the worse and a descent:
 God turned them into apes—they'd violated 2595

Their promises to God, it's been related.*
 It wasn't a mere bodily transformation
 But transformation of the heart, aware one:
 When one's heart is an ape's heart, you should know
 One's earthly body is as well brought low.
 If its heart had some worth how could the donkey
 Be brought low for its outward form's sake only?
 The famed cave's sleepers' dog* had a good nature—
 Its bodily form did not make it inferior.
 The Sabbath group faced outward transformation 2600
 So people clearly saw their degradation.
 For breaking vows millions of men we see
 Have turned to swine and asses inwardly.

The fox returns for a second time to that donkey that had fled in order to fool it again.

The fox rushed to the donkey that had fled.
 'One can't be friends with one like you,' it said,
 'Ignoble one, what did I ever do
 To be led to a dragon's lair by you?
 What caused you to despise my whole existence,
 Stubborn one, but your own appalling essence?'
 Like scorpions that bite men's feet even though 2605
 They haven't suffered from them any blow,
 Or like the devil, our souls' enemy,
 Though we've not ever harmed him actually.
 It's in his nature—our souls' enemy:
 Seeing human demise fills him with glee.
 He never quits pursuing all the people.
 How can he flee his nature, which is evil?
 Without cause his gross essence constantly
 Draws him to enmity and tyranny.
 He beckons you towards a tent—instead 2610
 He wants to hurl you down a well: He'd said:
 'There is a pool and fountains in this place.'
 But throws you in a tank head-first at pace.
 He flung down Adam to dire situations
 Though he had vision and true inspirations,

And Adam hadn't harmed him previously
Or done a thing to that foe hurtfully.

'That was due to a charm,' the fox then said,
 'A lion magically was shown instead.
I'm weaker than you—how can I feed there
2615 If a lion's really there? I wouldn't dare!
Without use of a magic charm back there
 All hungry ones would rush in for a share—
How could that meadow be preserved for us
 If drawing every keen rhinoceros
Or elephant? I wanted to teach you
 Not to be scared if you see such a view
That terrifies, but I forgot to say,
 Immersed in pity for you yesterday.
I'd seen you with no food and very hungry—
2620 I hurried so you'd find your cure more quickly.
I would have told you of the magic charm
 And that the lion's not real and can't harm.'

The donkey's reply to the fox.

The donkey said, 'Begone, O enemy!
 Your vile face is one I don't want to see.
That God who has made you to be unlucky
 Has made you loathsome, stubborn, and so ugly.
With which face are you coming back this way?
 A rhino's skin is not as thick, I'd say.
You'd sought my blood and did so openly,
2625 Saying: "Come to the meadow now with me!"
I saw the Angel of Death's own face back then—
 Have you brought here your cleverness again?
Though I'm a donkey, I'm a living being
 With a soul too, so I am not believing.
If a mere child sees what I did behold
 Of terror there, he would at once turn old.
Losing my heart and soul, I rushed in fear
 Headlong far from the mountain to get here.

My legs froze at the moment it occurred—
 Since I'd seen terror unveiled there, you heard
 Me cry to God, "I vow God, who is kind,
 Release my legs now please from their tight bind
 And I won't heed their tempting talk. I plead
 And promise, God, who helps all those in need."
 My God released my legs that moment there
 Due to my sharing my despair and prayer.
 That lion would have reached me very quickly
 If He had not—what a fate for a donkey?
 The jungle's lion sent you back to me
Evil sidekick, to use your trickery.
 By the pure essence of Eternal God,
 A bad snake's better than a bad friend's fraud.
 The bad snakes take a life, but the bad friends
 Will drag one to a fire that never ends.'
 Without words hearts take that friend's disposition,
 In ways that are not made clear to your vision.
 And when he casts his shadow over you
 That one steals all your moral fibre too.
 If your mind has become a drunken dragon,
 The bad friend's emerald, your most feared weapon!
 He makes your mind's eye pop out all at once.
 His curses throw you into pestilence.

The fox answers the donkey.

The fox said, 'My drink has no dregs at all,
 But your imaginings certainly aren't small—
 You simpleton, it's all just in your head;
 I bring no malice nor make schemes ahead.
 Don't view me through the lens of your illusions!
 Why target dearest friends with your suspicions?
 Have nice thoughts of your own well-meaning brother,
 Though he may look like he will give you bother!
 When such suspicions come out in the open
 A hundred thousand friendships will be broken.
 If a compassionate friend should act malicious,
 That tests you, use your brain—don't be suspicious!

Especially me, though I have a bad name—
 It was a charm, not evil you should blame.
 And if it was just evil, then that's fate.
 Friends must forgive mistakes, not rush to hate.'

Imaginings, fear, and craving all are major 2650
 Obstacles for the mystical wayfarer.
 Imaginings harmed so many men already
 Like Abraham, who was then mountain-steady:
 'This is my Lord!'* great Abraham once said
 When by imaginings he had been misled.
 Those who were experts in interpretation
 Perceived in this way too each constellation.
 The world of blinkering imagination
 Pulled that strong mountain up from its foundation.
 Such that he said, 'This is my Lord!'*—how then 2655
 Would geese or donkeys fare compared with men?
 Mountain-strong intellects drowned in the sea
 Of such imaginings and mere fantasy.
 The flood humiliated mountains—where
 Is safety outside Noah's ark out there?
 The faithful split then into seventy-two*
 Due to illusion, which blocks truth from you.
 Men with true certainty escape this soon—
 They don't think eyebrows are the crescent moon:
 Lacking Omar's light for support, one might 2660
 Allow an eyebrow's hair to block one's sight.*
 A million scary ships were badly wrecked
 Due to imagining's massive seas effect.
 Pharaoh, philosopher, was one of these,
 The least, and they eclipsed his moon with ease.
 No one knows who's the cuckold from the men—
 If one did, he'd know it is not him then.
 Your own imaginings now have made you giddy—
 Why focus on another man's already?
 I am helpless against my self-conceit— 2665
 Why come to me with yours and take a seat?

With all my heart I seek somebody selfless—
 I'll be the ball for that bat that is precious.
 One who's lost ego owns all egos thus—
 Without self-love he's loved by all of us:
 A mirror with no image of its own
 Is better—it makes others' faces known.

*Story about Shaikh Mohammad Sarrazi of Ghazni.**

Once there was an ascetic based in Ghazni;
 A learned man: Mohammad Sarrazi.
 He'd break his fast with vine leaves every night; 2670
 He sought one goal for years with all his might.
 The King of Being showed things marvellous
 But he just sought the King's own handsomeness.
 Weary of self, he reached a mountain top
 Then said, 'Appear to me or I'll just drop!'
 God said, 'It's not yet time for such an honour.
 You won't die if you fall—I want you longer
 Alive.' He threw himself down out of love
 But landed in deep water from above.
 When that one sick of life saw he'd not died 2675
 He grew shocked and lamented being denied,
 For this life seemed like death in his own view
 And everything was topsy-turvy too.
 Through unseen routes he begged death in this way:
 '*My life is in my death*'* was what he'd say.
 Like life this man embraced death and he was
 Assenting to it for his higher cause.
 Like Ali: his sweet basil's sword and knife,
 Narcissus and wild rose were foes of life.*
 'Leave for the town the desert where you've been!' 2680
 Said a strange voice beyond seen and unseen.
 'You know my secret's details, hair by hair—
 How should I serve in that town over there?'
 'Your self-abasement is the work that's better
 You'll then be like Abbas Dabsi, the beggar.*
 Take gold from rich men for a while and give
 It to the poor who struggle just to live.

This is the service for a while to do.'

He said, 'To hear is to obey you too.'

So many questions, answers, and discussion 2685

Continued then between them in this session

The earth and sky were filled with light—just look

And you will find it noted in his book.

I have abridged their dialogue, so then

The mysteries won't be heard by useless men.

*After many years the Shaikh comes to Ghazni from the desert and
takes round a basket as instructed from the Unseen,
then distributes what is collected to the poor.*

*Whoever's heart has glory of Labbayka **

Gets many couriers, letter after letter.

*It is like when the windows of a house are open—sunshine
moonbeams, rain, letters, etc. never stop entering.*

That fine obedient one went to that place:

Ghazni, which was illumined by his face.

Some came to greet him happily on that day,

But he went quickly in a secret way.

All the nobility were decorating 2690

Their palaces for him, anticipating.

'I've not come to show off,' the Shaikh then said,

'I've come to beg and get abased instead.

I don't intend to chat, please understand—

I'm begging door-to-door, basket in hand.

I'm slave to God's command, and His decree

Deems I should live a life of beggary.

In begging I won't use terms deemed obscure—

I'll tread the basest beggar's way as cure,

So in abasement I'll get fully drowned 2695

And hear abuse from everyone around.

God's order's clear and I obey, unfazed:

He said to crave for *cravers are abased*.

Faith's King told me to crave, so from today

To hell with being content is what I say.

How can I pose? He wants humility.

I'll not act royal—He wants beggary.
 Humility and begging are now precious;
 My begging is like twenty of Abbas's.*
 Basket in hand, the Shaikh went round and said: 2700
'Give for God's sake if you're divinely led!'
 Though higher than God's own throne inwardly
'For God's sake give!' was his activity.
 The Prophets ply the same trade nonetheless:
 They beg though people near are penniless.
 They tell all: *'Lend to God!'** Contrastingly
 They then say *'Help us God!'* repeatedly.

For him to heaven there were doors galore,
 But still the Shaikh went begging door-to-door,
 Since he begged earnestly and for God's sake, 2705
 Not for his belly. It was no mistake.
 And if it had been for his gullet's pleasure
 That gullet has so much light none can measure:
 For him bread, milk, and honey would be treats
 Better than the fakir's fasts and retreats.
 He feeds on light, so don't you say it's bread.
 He plants fine flowers and won't waste them instead.
 Just like the flame that feeds off oil and candle,
 From feeding, his light would increase, though ample:
 God said for eating bread: *'Not too much, greedy!'** 2710
 He didn't say for light: *'Be sated easily!'*
 Other throats suffer and are tried no less,
 But this man's throat was not prone to excess.
 It isn't greed, but a command instead.
 By greed such lofty souls are never led.
 If the elixir tells the copper, 'Give me
 Yourself!' Craving is not the cause most clearly,
 For God had offered this Shaikh treasures here
 On earth as far as to the seventh sphere,
 But he had said, 'Creator, I'm a lover: 2715
 I would be worthless if I sought another:
 If I should look at paradise as well
 Or if I serve you due to fear of hell,

Then I would be a pleasure-seeker oddly,
For these are just to benefit the body.'
Bodies to lovers whom God nourishes
Aren't worth a bean—in fact they're even less.
The body of the mystic Shaikh became
Transformed—don't call it 'body'! Not the same!
A lover of God's love seek a reward? 2720
A trusted Gabriel be a thief? The hoard
Of the wealth of this world was nothing more
Than straw to Laili's lover, blind and sore—
Gold and mud had the same worth in his view;
What's gold when one feels life is worthless too?
Wolves, lions, and wild beasts all quickly heard
Of him and neared as if from the same herd,
For he was purged of animality,
Love-filled, his flesh now poisonous totally:
To wild beasts wisdom's sugar's poisonous, 2725
For good is contrary to wickedness.
Wild beasts won't eat the lover's flesh at all.
Love's known to good and evil ones—to all.
And if they 'eat' by backbiting, instead
His flesh turns poisonous, leaving them soon dead.
All things besides love are devoured by love:
The worlds are one grain in the beak of love.
Does a grain ever eat instead the bird?
Do hay troughs eat the horse? That is absurd!
Serve God, so you might be a lover too; 2730
Serving's earning: it's action that you do.
A slave yearns for his freedom desperately;
A lover never wishes to be free.
A slave seeks honours and a big reward;
A lover's honour's vision of his Lord.
Love is beyond all speech and hearing too—
Love is an ocean with depths far from view.
Though one can't count the drops inside the sea,
That ocean makes seas small comparatively.
This discourse could go on and last forever— 2735
Return to hear of that Shaikh of the era.

*On the meaning of 'If it were not for you, I would not have
created the heavens.'**

A Shaikh became a wandering beggar there;
 Love didn't care about his rank—beware!
 Love boils the ocean like a cauldron and
 Love crumbles massive mountains just like sand.
 Love splits apart the heavens frequently;
 Love makes the ground shake also nonchalantly.
 Pure love united with Mohammad too:
 God said for love of him, '*If not for you!*'*
 And since in love he was the final goal 2740
 He was unique in his prophetic role:
 'If it were not for the sake of pure love
 Would I have made the heavens up above?
 I raised that lofty sphere, so you would know
 The loftiness of love from down below.
 And further benefits come from that sphere:
 It's like the egg that hatches chicks down here.
 I brought the ground low down so you could see
 That love is based on true humility,
 And we gave grass and freshness to bare ground 2745
 So you see how ascetics change around.
 These solid mountains show the quality
 Of lovers' states in firmest constancy—
 Although the former's just an image, it
 Is closer to your mind's reach, isn't it?
 Anguish is something people will compare
 With barbs—it's just so you will be aware.
 Hearts, too, aren't really stony, but my son
 We say that as an apt comparison.
 If something is beyond conception's limit 2750
 Blame your conception's power—don't dismiss it!

*The Shaikh goes to the house of a prince to beg with his basket four
 times in one day due to a prompting from the Unseen. The prince
 rebukes him for that impudence and he apologizes to the prince.*

The Shaikh went begging four times in one day
 Up to the prince's palace on his way:

Basket in hand, '*Something for God?*' he said,
 '*The soul's Creator seeks a piece of bread.*'
(This statement is absurd and very silly;
 It makes Universal Reason even giddy.)
The prince saw him, 'Impudent one, speak less!
 And don't you smear my name with stinginess!
What thick-skinned front to come in such a way 2755
 To my home and beg four times in one day!
Who's bound to you, Shaikh, over here? I've never
 Seen such a brazen and expectant beggar!
You have made beggars' reputations rot;
 Abbas-like* ugliness is what you've brought:
Abbas-e Dabsi* has your sidekick's role—
 Spare infidels from such an ill-starred soul!
'I'm bound by God's command,' the Shaikh then said,
 'Be silent and don't boil in rage instead!
Had I seen in me craving for some bread 2760
 I'd have ripped up that belly then instead.
For seven years I've lived off vine leaves due
 To love's fire, which can cook the body too.
From eating fresh and dry leaves, as you've seen,
 This body of mine has been turning green.
While you're behind the human veil that covers,
 Don't look down critically upon God's lovers!'

Clever ones who can split hairs as an art,
 And even learnt astronomy by heart,
With sorcery, magic, and philosophy, 2765
 Though they lacked knowledge of Reality,
Yet have been striving to their highest levels,
 Which helped them to surpass their nearest rivals,
Faced love's withdrawal and exclusivity
 With this sun vanishing from them, you see:
How come the sun just vanished from the sight
 Of those who see the stars both day and night?
So quit this, listen to me and beware!
 View lovers with love's eye now, if you care!
Souls look ahead and there's no time to waste— 2770

They can't apologize now due to haste.
 Understand! Don't rely on speech alone!
 Don't wound the lovers' breasts—leave them alone!
 Their ecstasies are making you suspicious?
 Don't quit your vigilance then—keep being cautious!
 Compulsory, allowed, impossible:
 Select the middle course then, if you will!

The prince cries due to the counsel from the Shaikh and the reflection of his sincerity, then gives away his treasury after that boldness. The Shaikh keeps his purity and does not accept it, saying: 'I can't do anything without a divine prompting.'

The Shaikh said this and then wept loudly there,
 Tears rolling down his cheeks, which showed his care.
 His being sincere thus touched the prince's mind— 2775
 Each moment love cooks marvels, you will find.
 Lovers' sincerity moves an inert thing
 So moving knowing hearts is not amazing.
 Moses's being sincere moved rod and mountain,
 What's more it touched too the majestic ocean.*
 Mohammad's once moved the moon's beauty and
 It stopped the bright sun's movement that was planned.*

Prince and renunciant thus faced each other
 And as they both wept they let out a holler.
 After they'd wept a while the prince spoke out: 2780
 'Arise O worthy man! You can pick out
 Whatever you want from my treasury
 Though you deserve much more than that from me.
 My home is yours. Choose what you like, for you
 The two worlds aren't enough. That is my view.'
 He said, 'I've not been granted the permission
 To pick out something by my own volition.
 I cannot overstep or interfere
 By my own will like this, if I'm sincere.'
 He thus gave his excuse and stepped away 2785
 Because the gift was not sincere that day—

It was sincerely free from enmity
 And rage, but not that Shaikh's sincerity.
 'God has commanded me thus,' then he said,
 'Go like a beggar asking for some bread!'

*The prompting came to the Shaikh from the Unseen: 'In these past two years you have taken and given on our command, but from now on you are only to give and not to take. Keep your hand under the mat, which we have made like the bag of Abu Horayra, * for what is due to you, and you will find whatever you want there. This is so that the people of this world should learn that there is something beyond this world, where, if you take dust in your hand it turns to gold, and the dead who enter there become alive, the most ill-starred become the most favoured by the stars, unbelief becomes faith, and poison becomes antidote. It is not in this world nor outside of it, neither under nor over, neither joined nor separate, without us knowing its description. Every moment thousands of impressions and symbols become manifest: the work of the hand in the form of a hand, the glance of the eye in the form of an eye, eloquence of the tongue in the form of a tongue. Neither inside, nor outside, neither joined, nor separate.' The wise will find a hint sufficient.*

The Shaikh for two years did this and then later
 An order reached him from God, the Creator:
 'You'll give but never beg beyond this hour—
 From the Unseen We've given you this power:
 Whoever asks for something, just like that
 Hand it to him from under this great mat!
 Give it from Mercy's treasure with no limit!
 Dust will now turn to gold in your hand. Give it!
 Whatever's asked for, give and don't feel stress—
 There is no limit to God's huge largesse.
 In Our bestowal there is no reduction
 And no regret about this generous action.
 You put your hand beneath the mat to hide
 The truth thus from the evil eye outside.
 From under that mat bring out what they lack—
 Give it to beggars with a broken back!
 Give that wage which demands no work to earn it!

2790

2795

Give the fine pearl to anyone who yearns it!
*God's hand's above their hands** and you should be:
 Like God's hand give provisions liberally!
 Release from their binds those that owe a large debt—
 Like rain, transform to green this world's vast carpet!

For one more year he worked as he was told,
 Giving the Lord of Judgement's purse's gold:
 Dirt turned to gold in his hand. Generous giver, 2800
 Hatem Ta'i* before him was a beggar.

*How the Shaikh knew the thoughts of beggars without them having
 to say them, and the amount of loans of debtors likewise, which is a
 sign of 'Depart to My creation with My attributes!'**

If a poor man would not talk, he could read
 His mind and give him something for his need.
 He'd give the hunchback what he had in mind,
 No more, no less, exactly the right kind.
 They'd ask him then, 'How did you know that he
 Was hoping to receive that secretly?'
 'My heart's house now is empty,' he'd advise,
 'Empty of beggars just like paradise;
 Nothing but love of God's left in my heart 2805
 And thoughts of union with Him, not to part.
 I've swept this house so clear of good and evil
 That it's filled with love of the One God, people—
 Anything other than God that I should see
 Reflects from beggars and is not from me.'
 If dates appear in water that you see
 They're just reflecting from a nearby tree:
 If you see forms in water, they're not there—
 Those are reflections from outside, beware!
 To clear the water from the chips on it 2810
 Cleansing the body's a prerequisite,
 So no trash stays and no turbidity
 And it reflects one's face reliably.
 Your body's full of muddy water—start

To clean that water now, foe of the heart.
You love to pour dirt in the stream through eating
And sleeping always, though that's self-defeating.

The way to read people's minds.

But once the water's heart is clear at last
Faces' reflections are then clearly cast.
Unless your inner world's been purified
Your house is full with evil beasts inside. 2815
Stubbornly stuck in asininity,
When will you learn of Christ-like souls? Tell me!
If images appear, how will you know
From where they have arrived to make a show?
Your body fades on self-denial's way
Until all thoughts inside are swept away.

*The slyness of the fox prevails over the donkey's wish to avoid
falling into temptation.*

The donkey tried debating very long
With that fox, but its hunger was too strong,
So greed prevailed—its patience had to break: 2820
Many gullets get cut for love of cake.
That Truth-Supported Messenger has said:
'Poverty's almost unbelief' we've read.
That donkey was the prisoner of hunger:
'If it's a plot and I die, I'll no longer
Suffer from tortuous hunger anyway—
If this is life, death's better any day.'
Although the donkey had vowed previously
It lapsed because of asininity.
Greed makes one blind and stupid—it will make 2825
The stupid think death's a good choice to take.
For donkeys' souls death isn't easy, is it,
Because they lack the everlasting spirit?
Lacking this it is wretched totally—
Boldness before death is stupidity.
(Strive till your soul's eternal—when you die

You'll have provisions on which to rely!
 It has no confidence that the Great Feeder
 Might scatter from the Unseen largesse nearer.
 Grace hasn't left it lacking daily bread 2830
 Till now, though it's felt hunger pangs instead.
 A hundred other pains take hunger's place
 From indigestion, raising up their face—
 Hunger's suffering's better, isn't it?
 It's light and gentle and gives benefit.
 Hunger's suffering's purer than such pains
 Especially since it gives you virtuous gains.

Explaining the excellence of abstention and hunger.

Hunger's medicine's sultan, so embrace it!
 Don't look down at it when you have to face it!
 Every unsweet thing is made sweet by hunger; 2835
 Without it, all sweet things would be shunned, brother.
 One day a man was eating mouldy bread—
 'How can you eat this?' somebody then said.
 'When hunger's doubled through abstention's power
 Barley bread tastes like halva then that hour.
 I eat just halva after I abstain—
 I fast a lot of course with much to gain.'
 Not everyone can truly master hunger
 Because this lower realm is full of fodder.
 Hunger's bestowed on God's elite, as then 2840
 It makes them powerful lions among men.
 How could such hunger reach each beggar near?
 They give him fodder since there's so much here:
 'Eat up for you are worthless!' he is told,
 'You're "bread fowl" not the water fowl that's bold.'

Story about a Shaikh reading a disciple's mind and learning of his greed. He counsels him with words and in doing so bestows on him by God's command the nourishment of trust in God.

A Shaikh with his disciple rushed ahead
 Towards a town where there was little bread.

Then fear of hunger gave the latter stress
Constantly due to his own heedlessness.
The Shaikh could read his mind and was aware: 2845
‘How long will you stay miserable in there?
You are consumed with sorrow over bread,
Losing all trust and patience from your head.
You’re not one of the marvellous elite
To not have nuts and raisins. You’ll soon eat.
Hunger for their great souls is sustenance—
How could that be for you, you giddy dunce:
Relax, you aren’t one of them that you
Should stay without bread in your kitchen too.
Bowl upon bowl, loaf upon loaf are here 2850
For regular men needing them. That’s clear.
When such a one dies, bread steps up to shout:
“He killed himself through fear of going without.”
After you’ve gone bread stays—arise and take it!
You who would kill yourself with grief mistake it.
Trust God and stop your limbs from shaking too!
Your daily bread is more in love with you
Than you with it. For this it’s not come nearer:
Your total lack of patience, interferer!
If you had patience, it would not now hover, 2855
But throw itself at you just like a lover.
Why shake with fever fearing hunger when
One can trust God, then live as sated men?’

Story about a cow that is alone on an island. God fills that big island with plants and basil as fodder for the cow and the cow feeds on it all until nightfall, growing as fat as a mountain crag. When night comes the cow cannot sleep due to misery and fear: ‘I’ve grazed on the whole plain—what will I eat tomorrow?’ Due to this misery it becomes as thin as a crescent moon. At daybreak it sees the whole plain greener and lusher than the day before. It eats again and grows fat. Once more at night the same anxiety seizes it. For years it lives like this without developing confidence.

In this world a green island was once known
Which a sweet-mouthed cow lived on all alone,

Grazing on all the fields till nightfall to
 Be sated and grow quickly stronger too.
 'What will I eat tomorrow?' in despair
 It worries at night, wakes thin as a hair.
 When morning comes the field turns green in haste, 2860
 Green shoots and sprouts as high as someone's waist.
 The cow wakes hungry, so it once again
 Grazes till nightfall on all of the plain.
 It thus grows bigger, fattening up like that,
 Its body getting nourishment and fat.
 At night due to anxiety and sorrow,
 It grows thin and fears lack of food tomorrow:
 'What will I eat at mealtime in the day?'
 For years the cow behaves in the same way,
 Never thinking, 'For many years I'd eat 2865
 On this same pasture and I'd never meet
 A day when I would not find daily bread—
 Why then this deep anxiety and dread?'
 And when night falls that cow grows thin again:
 'My nurturer's gone—how will I cope then?'

This cow's the carnal soul, the field it's in
 Is this world, where through worry it grows thin,
 Thinking: 'What will I eat? I am perplexed.
 Where should I seek food during daytime next?'
 You've eaten now for years, not gone without— 2870
 Look at the past! In future do not doubt!
 Remember the fine food you've eaten here!
 Don't worry 'What's left?' or feel mortal fear!

*The lion makes the donkey its prey, becomes thirsty after its exertion and goes to the spring to drink water. Before the lion gets back the fox has eaten the liver, the heart, and the kidneys, which are the delicacies. The lion looks in vain for the liver and the heart, then asks the fox, 'Where is the liver and the heart?' The fox answers, 'If it had had a liver and heart, after experiencing such suffering on that day and escaping only through a thousand tricks, how could it have come back to you?' 'If we had listened and reasoned we would not have become among the denizens of hellfire.'**

The fox took to the lion that fooled donkey.

The lion ravaged it then very roughly.

Exertion gave thirst to the animals' king

Who went to drink some water at a spring.

The fox then ate its heart and liver up,

Not wishing to give a superb chance up,

But when the lion came back from the spring

2875

It looked for heart and liver—not a thing:

'Where is the liver? Where's the heart gone too?

No animal can live without these two.'

'If it had had a liver and a heart

How could it have come back once far apart?

It had seen here the Last Hour's awful day

And in sheer terror scampered far away.

If it had had a heart or liver then

How could it have come back to you again?'

It's not a heart if there's no light within;

2880

It is mere clay when there's no soul within.

Glass vessels that do not have the soul's light

Are urine vials and 'lamp' here's not right.

The lamp's light is a gift from The Most Glorious.

Glass and clay are both made by Him; it's obvious.

Vessels are numbered necessarily,

But all their flames are still in unity:

When light from six lamps mixes you can see

That such light doesn't have plurality.

Vessels drove Jews to polytheism's error;

2885

Believers saw the light and sensed much better.

When just the spirit's vessel is in view

That sight sees Seth and Noah then as two.
 A stream's a stream when water's flowing in;
 A man is someone with a soul within.
 Others are not men, but mere forms instead.
 They have been slain by their own lust for bread.

*Story about that monk who went around with a lamp by day in the
 middle of the marketplace because of the ecstasy he felt.*

A man would hold a candle and he'd wander
 By day at the bazaar with love and ardour.
 A busybody asked him, 'Mister, why 2890
 Do you search every stall that you pass by
 And search with that lamp when it isn't dark
 In daylight? Please explain to me this lark.'
 'I'm looking for a human who's not dead,
 But living through that Holy Breath,' he said.
 'Can such a man be found?' 'This market's full,
 Great sage—surely here men are plentiful?'
 'I want one who prevails on this broad street
 Of two lanes, where both rage and lust he'll meet—
 Where is he when such rage and lust comes, where? 2895
 I'm searching for this person everywhere.
 Where in the world's a man who's real this way
 That I might give my life to him today?'
 'You're looking for a certain rarity
 While heedless of both faith and destiny:
 You seek the branch, but not the root, you see—
 We are the branch, the root is fate's decree.'

Fate makes revolving heavens lose their way,
 Turns Mercuries to fools too straight away.
 The world is made more cramped. Iron and stone 2900
 Become like water through such power alone.
 You have resolved to take this path so deeply,
 But you will take step after step naively.
 You've seen the millstone turn, but now won't you
 Look at the water in the stream there too?

Have you seen dust rise in the air? You must
Look for the wind within the rising dust.
Or cauldrons full of thoughts boil fervently?
Look at the fire beneath it cleverly!
God told Job, 'I have honoured every hair
Of yours with special patience that is rare—
Don't just regard your patience down below:
Look at my giving patience, then you'll know.'
How long will you watch water wheels still turning?
Stick out your head, watch water flow, keep learning!
You often claim, 'I've seen'—When you do see
You'll be sent many good signs mystically.
You've glanced upon the wave foam's circle motion—
For true bewilderment look at the ocean!
One who sees foam tells of the mystery—
For true bewilderment look at the sea!
One who observes foam there makes an intention—
Seeing seas turns one's heart into an ocean.
One who sees foam is calculating still—
One who sees the whole sea has no self-will.
One who sees foam will wander by mistake—
One who has seen the sea is not a fake.

A Muslim invites a Magian to convert to Islam.

A man once told a Magian, 'Unbeliever,
Become a Muslim, be a true believer!
'If God wills I'll become one,' he replied,
'If He gives more grace, faith's intensified.'
'God wants you to believe,' the first man said,
'So your soul can escape hell's grip ahead,
But your ill-starred self and the horrid devil
Drag you to unbelief and your fire temple.'
'Well, since the latter pair prevail, I should
Join with the stronger ones, though they're not good.
I only can side with the stronger option;
I fall towards the stronger pull's direction.
God wanted for me strong sincerity—
What value has that wish he didn't see?

The self and Satan both prevailed, you know,
 While His Grace suffered a tremendous blow.
 Let's say you build a palace or a mansion
 And fill it with designs that give attraction—
 You want it to become a mosque, but see
 Someone transform it to a monastery.
 Or you have cloth that's very fine and rare
 To make yourself a shirt that you can wear—
 You want a fine shirt, but your enemy 2925
 Makes trousers with that cloth so spitefully.
 Dear friend, what can that fine cloth really do
 Other than go with the prevailing view?
 You lost, but you can't give the cloth the blame—
 Who's not controlled by those who rule the same?
 Against one's will if someone barges in
 Their mansion and brings a big thornbush in,
 The mansion's owner is humiliated
 That such an action has been orchestrated—
 I'd too be ruined by association 2930
 With someone suffering such humiliation.
 Since the self's wish is stronger obviously,
 '*What God wills happens*'* is a mockery.
 Though I be the most lowdown infidel
 I wouldn't think such things of God as well:
 That someone should, in spite of Him, feel free
 To seek in His own realm authority
 And occupy it such that He who made
 The breath can't stop him with the words He's said.
 He wishes to repel him and must do, 2935
 The devil though makes him stressed through and through.
 Being the devil's slave is so compelling,
 Since he is dominant at every gathering.
 This way he'll not avenge me—that would be
 So good, for how could God then rescue me?
 The things the devil wishes find fruition—
 So who'll make nice again my own condition?'

*The parable of Satan at the door of the
Merciful God.*

What God wills happens, O Lord God! God is*
 The ruler in both Place and Placelessness.
 Nobody has the power without His say 2940
 To even change a hair tip in some way.
 His is the kingdom, His the command. What's more—
 Satan's the basest dog outside his door.
 If a Turk has a dog outside his door
 With its face down there on the threshold floor,
 His children pull its tail hard constantly,
 Yet it will stay submissive, abjectly.
 But if a stranger passes by, it will
 Attack him like a lion would do still.
 'He's firm with unbelievers,'* God has said: 2945
 A rose to friends, to foes a thorn instead.
 The Turkman gives it broth that is delicious—
 That's why it is a good guard: loyal, vicious.
 God brought that base dog, Satan, to existence
 And placed in him so many schemes, for instance.
 God feeds him with men's honour, so he'll rob
 That from the good and bad as his own job.
 His broth's the honour of your average man
 And that dog Satan eats it when he can.
 How can his soul not be devoted fully 2950
 To the decree of His power's door then? Tell me!
 Pack after pack, rebellious and loyal
 Like dogs *that spread their paws by thresholds,** hopeful.
 At the cave's doorway to divinity
 They seek, like dogs, commands so viscerally:
 God says, 'O devil dog, test them to see
 How they walk on the true itinerary!
 Attack, block, watch who's weaker and then see
 Who's stronger also in sincerity!
 How's praying to God going to help you here 2955
 When that proud dog is rushing to get near?
 With '*I take refuge!*' you're just shouting, 'Hey,
 Turkman, shout at your dog to clear the way,

So I can come to your tent when it's gone
And beg for something from you, generous one!

If this Turk can't stop his own dogs attacking
This prayer's invalid as the owner's lacking.
'I, too, take refuge from the dog!' he says,
'I'm helpless in my own home where it stays.
You can't come to my door and I can't go 2960
Outside through it—we're both stuck, you should know.'
To hell with that Turkman and his guest there—
One dog has tied the necks up of that pair.
Don't say the true Turk has to shout out here—
Even lions would vomit blood in fear!
Calling yourself 'Lion of God' to cheers,
You couldn't cope against a dog for years.
How can this dog hunt for you anyway
When you have clearly turned to that dog's prey?

A Sunni believer's response to the determinist believing non-Muslim and his giving a proof for confirming the free will of God's servant. The sunnah is a road trodden by the feet of the Prophets and to the right of that path lies the desert and fatalism, where one does not believe in one's own power of choice and one denies God's command and prohibition through an obscure interpretation. Denying the command and prohibition necessarily denies one paradise, for paradise is the reward of those who obey God's commands and hell is the reward for those who oppose the command. I will not say what else it involves, for the intelligent are satisfied with a hint. To the left of that path is the desert of free will, where one considers the will of the created being as overcoming the will of the Creator—from that arises the corruption that the Magian enumerated.

The Muslim said, 'Determinists, heed well 2965
This speech. You've said your piece, now I will tell
My answer—have you seen your own game, player?
Observe your chess opponent's skill and flair!
You've read out your apology—now hear
This Sunni's letter! Why not change? Have fear!

You talked on fate as a Necessitarian—
Hear now its secret in my explanation:
Without a doubt we all possess a will—
You can't deny what's so perceptible.
Does someone ever tell a stone, "Come you!" 2970
How can one ask bricks to be loyal too?
No one would tell a man, "Fly in the air!"
Or someone blind, "Look at me from back there!"
God said, "*There's no objection for the blind.*"*
How can God punish them when He's so kind?
You don't tell stones, "You've come too late to me",
Or ask a stick, "Why are you striking me?"
Would you then tell one subject to compulsion
Such things, or strike at such a helpless person?
Honour, rebuke, command, and prohibition 2975
Are for those with the power of choice, O pure one.
There's free will in wrongdoing and oppression—
By 'self' and 'devil' this is my intention.
Free will is inside you, please understand—
On seeing Joseph, it then cuts its hand.*
It's in your soul with its own special trigger—
Joseph's face makes it spread its wings much bigger.
A dog's will's lost when it's asleep, but when
It sees a bone it wags its tail again.
Horses will neigh on seeing food to eat; 2980
A cat meows on movement of some meat.
Sight triggers thus the will, as should be known,
The way sparks jump from fire when breath is blown.
Satan also triggers your will with ease
As go-between with messages from Vis.
Once he presents the sought one to his victim
The sleeping will unravels then within him.
In spite of that, the angel comes to offer
Good things that can raise in your heart a clamour,
Triggering your will to good. These dispositions 2985
Are both asleep before their expositions:
Angels and devils, both presenters who
Pump up the veins of free will inside you.
Through inspiration and temptation too,

Your will to do good multiplies in you.
 Good man, on finishing your daily prayer
 You greet the angels at each shoulder there: *
 "Your inspiration and your instigation
 Triggered my will to pray with true intention."
 After sins you send Satan a big curse
 Because it was through him you were perverse.
 These opposites present in secret view
 Things hidden in the Unseen's veil to you.'

2990

Remove the veil that's hiding the Unseen
 And you'll see faces of each go-between
 And from their words you then can clearly tell
 They were the hidden speakers there as well.
 The devil will say, 'Captive of the body,
 I just showed; I did not force anybody!'
 'I told you,' then the angel says to follow,
 'That this joy's bound to just increase your sorrow.
 Didn't I tell you on a certain day
 That there's a path to heaven in this way?
 All lovers of your soul who give souls pleasure,
 We bowed sincerely to your great ancestor.*
 At this time we are also serving you
 And we're inviting you to be served too.
 That group were enemies of your forefather:
 When told, "*Prostrate!*"* their chief refused the order.
 Take theirs and discard ours? Can you not tell
 Our service is the truthful kind as well?
 Now look at us and them with a clear view—
 Recognize by our voice and discourse too!
 If you hear secrets from a friend at night
 You'll know it's her when she speaks in dawn's light.
 If one night two men bring some news for you
 You'll recognize their speech the next day too.
 You hear at night a lion roar, dogs bark,
 But you can't make their forms out in the dark,
 But when the noise returns here the next day
 The wise one knows the sound that comes his way.

2995

3000

3005

The gist is this: angel and devil still
Exist so they'll present things for our will.
A will that can't be seen is inside you
And me, and it grows when it sees these two.
Teachers discipline children—that is known
But who would try to discipline a stone?
Would you say to a stone, 'Come the next day
And if you don't, wretch, I will make you pay!'
Would sensible men strike at bricks or would 3010
They tell a rock off? Would that do some good?
Fatalism is worse than free will, friend,
For it denies what senses comprehend.
The latter don't deny their senses though—
God's acts aren't with the senses that you know.
He who denies the Glorious God's own acts
Denies the evidence that proves the facts,
Saying, 'There's smoke without fire or that light
Of candles shines without a wick at night.'
The fatalist sees fire, but still will claim 3015
It isn't there for his denial's aim.
It burned his clothes—'There is no fire!' he said.
Like seeing clothes, but saying there's no thread.
The fatalists' claims are just sophistry—
That's why they're worse than infidelity,
Which claims, 'This world exists, but there's no lord'
And that to cry out 'O Lord!' is abhorred.
The fatalists will claim that this world's naught;
The sophistry adherent's in a knot.
The world acknowledges our will, commanding, 3020
Forbidding, 'Bring this thing, and don't bring that thing!'
He claims none of these actually exist—
There is no power of choice he will insist.
Animals recognize this sense of will,
But seeing proof of it is subtle still.
Since our will is perceptible, it's fit
That burdens for acts should be placed on it.

The inward perception of free will, fatalistic compulsion, anger, staying patient, being sated, and hunger is with the senses which can tell yellow from red, big from small, bitter from sweet, musk from dung and rough from soft—and through the sense of touch, warm from cold, burning from lukewarm, wet from dry, and touching a wall as opposed to touching a tree. Therefore, he who denies inner consciousness denies the senses, or rather even more, for the former is more apparent than the latter seeing as the senses can be blocked and stopped from perceiving, but it is not possible to block the way of experience of consciousness. A hint is enough for the wise.

Inner perception's with the senses, uncle:

Both of them run in the exact same channel.

'Do!' and 'Don't', both command and prohibition 3025

Are fine too, as are talk and exposition:

'Shall I do this or that on the next day?'

This is proof of free will for you, I say.

As for regret you feel for bad deeds still—

You have been rightly guided by your will.

The whole Qur'an's commanding and forbidding,

And threats—who'd order stone to do its bidding?

Would any wise man do this anyway,

To rage at bricks and rocks and then to say:

'I told you to do this, but you instead 3030

Chose not to, you who're powerless and dead!'

How then can reason order wood and stone

Or grab a cripple's image when it's known

It's not real, saying: 'Cripple, come and fight

In war with broken limbs!' This is not right.

How can That One who made the stars and sky

So stupidly give orders and deny?

You've said it can't be that God's impotent,

But call Him foolish and incompetent.

Impotence isn't in the free will view; 3035

Stupidity is worse though of these two.

The real Turk turns to visitors to say:

'Come without dogs and your long cloaks today,

Then enter safely from the other side,
So my dog's mouth stays closed, not open wide—
If you come to its door and choose not to,
My dog of course will certainly bite you.'
Go the way slaves should go and do not mind,
So his dog will be soft with you and kind!
If you should bring a dog with you, watch out! 3040
It will grow wild in that tent and act out.
If nobody but God possesses will
Why do you then rage at the miscreants still?
Why snarl in anger at your enemy?
Why deem it his responsibility?
If some roof timber falls on top of you
And wounds you very seriously too,
Would you rage at the timber angrily
Or hate it like a bitter enemy:
'Why did it break my hand with such a blow? 3045
It has behaved now like a mortal foe.'
When you're absolving grown-ups from all blame
Why discipline small children all the same?
You speak about one who has just robbed you:
'Arrest him, chop his hands off, jail him too!'
When someone tries to bed your wife you get
Intensely angry and will not forget.
If a flood sweeps your property away
Will your brain let you hate it from that day?
If wind should blow your turban off, how can 3050
You show it your heart's angry then, good man?
Anger in you proves that your will exists,
Refutes excuses of determinists.
And if the rider strikes the camel's back
That rider is the one it will attack.
It won't rage at his stick or wish it ill,
Which shows the camel, too, has choice and will.
If you should stone a dog, it will attack
Similarly and you'll fall on your back.
And if that dog should fetch the stone thrown too, 3055
It's angry with you, but it can't reach you.
Animals' minds can see free will—feel shame

Human, whose mind denies it all the same!
 It's clearly dawn, but lust for one last bite
 Means that the faster shuts his eyes to light:
 Since all he longs for is to eat some bread,
 He'll claim, 'It's not dawn yet', and turn his head
 Away from light: greed hides the sun from eyes—
 That he should turn away is no surprise.

*A story explaining the view that people have free will and showing
 that predestination and belief in fate do not deny free will.*

A thief said to the chief of the police: 3060
 'What I did was just one of God's decrees.'
 The chief replied, 'What I am doing, too,
 Is God's decree, dear friend, and just for you.'
 If someone steals a radish from a stall,
 Claiming: 'It's God's decree, wise one,' then all
 Will see him get punched fiercely in the head
 With: 'This is God's will—put it back instead!'
 Since this excuse is not acceptable
 By the greengrocer for a vegetable,
 You can't depend now on the same excuse 3065
 When going near a dragon. It's no use.
 You risk your wealth, your wife, your life as well,
 With that excuse, vile simpleton, heed well!
 Someone could now leave you humiliated
 And then say sorry, but his act was fated.
 If you think God's decree's a good excuse
 Then teach us, write a fatwa we can use,
 For I've so many things I lust for strongly,
 But fear of God has tied my hands to stop me.
 Do me a favour, teach me the excuse! 3070
 Untie my hands and feet so I can choose!
 Through your own will you've chosen such a skill,
 Declaring: 'I have thoughts and a free will.'
 If not, why did you choose this one skill then
 Among those possible, O chief of men?
 When it's the passions' and the self's turn, then
 You have the will of many hundred men,

And if a friend takes something small from you
The will to fight comes in your soul anew.
When it's the turn for thanks for God's gifts though 3075
You have no will—you're less than stones men throw.
This will be hell's excuse when you're abused:
'Please note that when I burn you, it's excused.'
No one thinks this excuses you today
And it won't keep the punisher away.
This is the way the world works and shows you
The way the next world will be functioning too.

*Another story in response to the Determinist and confirming free will and the soundness of command and prohibition, while also explaining that the Determinist's excuse is not accepted in any creed or religion nor does it lead to being saved from just desserts for the deed carried out, just as the Determinist Satan did not find release through it by saying: 'You made me err!'** A sample indicates much more.

A man once climbed another person's tree
Just like a thief, to take his fruit for free.
The actual owner of the orchard came: 3080
'What have you done? Before God you've no shame!
'Well, here in God's own orchard is God's slave
Eating the dates on its trees, which God gave,
So why blame him for this so stupidly?
It's the Rich Lord's spread—don't be miserly!
The owner called a servant, 'Go and fetch
A rope so I can answer this vile wretch!
He tied him to a tree then beat his back
And legs with a big stick in his attack.
'Have shame before God!' then the thief exclaimed, 3085
'You're killing someone who should not be blamed.'
'God's slave with God's stick', then the owner said,
'Is beating hard another slave instead:
It is God's stick and His back and His limb;
I'm just a slave: an instrument for Him.'
He answered, 'I'll ditch fatalism now—
Free will is from now on what I avow.'

His free will makes all other wills free too:

He is the rider who raised dust we view.

His free will is what makes ours and His order

3090

Is backed up by our free choice, its supporter.

Every created thing is capable

Of ruling over forms that have no will,

Dragging the latter like caught prey back here

Or dragging someone far off by his ear.

God's craftwork needs no instruments to use

And can turn someone's free will to his noose.

His will traps men without will everywhere;

God hunts such men without dog or a snare.

The carpenter has power, too, over wood,

3095

The artist over portraits, as he should;

The ironmonger's iron knows he rules;

The builder's ruler over all his tools.

But this case is in fact much rarer still—

Many wills bow like slaves before His will.

Does your power over inert things deprive

Them of inertness or do they survive?

Thus, His power over our wills similarly

Does not deprive us of a will that's free.

Declare that His will is complete yet you

3100

Can't blame Him for the wrong things that you do—

You've said, 'It's His wish I'm an unbeliever.'

Well, notice how your will's not absent either!

It's not your unbelief without volition:

Unwilling unbelief's a contradiction.

Commanding someone who can't is abhorred.

Anger at this is worse from the Kind Lord.

They beat the ox if it won't take the yoke,

But not because it can't fly! What a joke!

The ox is not excused for bad behaviour—

3105

Why should we then excuse the ox's trainer?

You aren't injured—don't now wrap your head

In bandage! You've free will—feel shame instead!

Strive to get freshness from God's cup—you will

Become then selfless and without a will.

Then all volition is that wine's completely.

Like drunks you'll be forgiven absolutely:
 If you beat something, wine is beating it.
 If you sweep something, wine is sweeping it.
 This drunkard's drunk from God's own cup and so 3110
 He must be just and sound, as you should know.
 The sorcerers told Pharaoh, 'Stop! Retreat!
 A drunk has no concern for hands and feet.'*
 That One's wine is our hands and feet today
 The outward hand's its worthless shadow play.

The meaning of 'Whatever God wills happens.' That is to say,
 'His will is the effective will. Seek His satisfaction. Do not be upset
 by others' rejection and anger!' Although the verb is in the past
 tense, there is no past or future in God's actions, for there is no
 morning or evening for God.*

'Whatever God wills happens'*—thus the message
 Is not: 'Be lazy here!' within this passage.
 It urges to be serious and sincere:
 'Prepare to be of service over here!'
 If someone says, 'Whatever you wish to', 3115
 Then you can do what you desire to do:
 You are permitted to be lax and slacken
 Because whatever you desire will happen.
 But when you're told, 'What God wills comes to be'*
 Your fate is His decree eternally.
 Why don't you hover near Him like a servant
 To pray with zeal and fully be observant?
 If you are told, 'What the vizier seeks out
 And all his wishes must be carried out',
 Would you rush faster than all other men 3120
 So he could show his kindness to you then,
 Or flee from the vizier and his home too?
 The latter won't draw his help now to you.
 This saying's turned you lazy—your perception
 And thoughts are upside down with that selection.
 What if they say: 'This sire decrees'—what's this?
 It means: 'Don't sit with others, but be his:
 Stick near this lord, for his is the decree:

He saves the friend's life, slays the enemy.
 What he should wish for you will see today. 3125
 Choose service to him and don't go astray!
 It doesn't mean: 'Since he rules, don't go near
 In case you're put to shame, which you should fear!
 The true interpretation's what makes you
 Ardent, hopeful, fast, and respectful too.
 And if it makes you lax, that situation:
 Is altering and not interpretation.
 It's meant to make men ardent everywhere,
 To hold in two arms those who feel despair.
 Ask the Qur'an its meaning or that man 3130
 Who's set fire to desire for the Qur'an,
 To be its sacrifice and thus accept it,
 To take the role of essence of his spirit—
 One either smells the roses with one's nose
 Or that oil that's absorbed the scent of rose.

*Similarly the Prophet said, 'The pen has dried', which means the ink has dried after it has written: 'Obedience and disobedience are not equal, neither honesty and theft.' The ink has dried. Thanks and the ingratitude of unbelief are not equal. The ink has dried. 'God does not let the reward of the righteous be lost.'**

'The ink has dried' has this intention too,
 To trigger the important work from you.
 The pen wrote that all actions will elicit
 Effects and consequences too, which fit it:
The ink has dried: live wrongly and you'll suffer; 3135
 If you bring goodness though, you're bound to prosper.
 Bring cruelty and lose luck: *the ink has dried.*
 Bring justice, then eat fruit: *the ink has dried.*
 When thieves steal, hands are lost: *the ink has dried.*
 When they drink wine they're drunk: *the ink has dried.*
 Do you think God would come now possibly
 Like one dismissed from prior authority,
 To say, 'This matter's not in my purview—
 Don't come to me to moan like you used to!
 Rather it means, '*The ink has dried*', so justice 3140

Is not the same in my view as injustice.
 I've made distinct what's good and what is evil,
 As well as bad and worse, for all you people.
 If you're more disciplined than other men
 God's grace will know and make it count more than
 Than that bit you excel by—you will see
 The mote become a mountain generously.
 If a king makes no serious distinction
 Between the good and seekers of oppression,
 The one who trembles, fearing his rejection, 3145
 And he who eyes his fortune for dissension,
 Considering them the same without a difference,
 Then he is not a real king in this instance.
 If you increase your efforts just one bit,
 God's weighing scales will carefully measure it.
 Before the other kings you work all night,
 But they can't tell what's falseness and what's light.
 And if a slanderer should speak ill of you,
 That nullifies your years of service too,
 But to *the Hearing and the Seeing King* 3150
 The slanderer's words will not mean anything.
 He makes the slanderers feel despair—if they
 Approach us with advice they wish to say
 To speak ill of the King in front of us:
 '*The ink has dried*: don't show Him faithfulness!
 How can '*the ink has dried*' mean actually
 That loyalty now equals treachery?
 Give treachery for treachery: '*It's dried.*'
 Give loyalty for loyalty: '*It's dried.*'
 There's pardon, but where's glorious hope that you, 3155
 Through piety, might yet be made pure too?
 A thief who's pardoned saves his life, but how
 Can he become a treasury minister now?
 Come, righteous one, each crown and banner must
 Have first developed out of actual trust,
 So if the sultan's son betrays instead
 The sultan will arrange to chop his head.
 But if an Indian slave shows loyalty
 '*Long may he live!*' says the authority.

What of a slave? A loyal dog at the door 3160
 Will make its owner happier than before—
 He'll kiss its mouth—and much victorious grace
 He'd give if he'd a lion in its place.
 Even a thief who should one day do service,
 His truthfulness uprooting then his falseness,
 Like Fozayl, once one of the highwaymen,*
 Repenting though much faster than ten men.
 The sorcerers showed Pharaoh* in that instance
 Similarly their faithfulness and patience—
 They lost their hands and feet—high price they paid— 3165
 Those worshipping for years would not have stayed
 The course—you've served for half a century
 So when will you acquire sincerity?

Story about the dervish who saw in Herat the well-dressed slaves of the Amid of Khorasan, on Arab horses, wearing gold-embroidered cloaks and bejewelled caps etc. He asked, 'Which princes or kings are they?' He was told, 'They are not princes; these are the slaves of the Amid of Khorasan.' He looked up towards the sky and said, 'O God, learn how to take care of slaves from the Amid!' (Over there they call the chief accountant 'Amid').

Once in Herat a man who was outspoken
 Noticed a nobleman's slave in the open
 Riding with satin clothes and gold belts too.
 He turned towards the sky, and prayed: 'O You,
 God, why don't you learn from their master too
 How to maintain slaves better than you do?
 God, learn how to maintain them properly 3170
 From this chief who's a royal appointee!
 He lacked food, destitute and naked too,
 Trembling due to the winter's cold. He who
 Was brazen as he'd lost his consciousness,
 And had grown rude due to his laziness.
 Relying on God's numerous gifts, he thought:
 'The mystic is God's close friend, is he not?'
 The king's friends can show boldness of this sort,
 But don't you show it when you lack support!

God gives waists, better than such belts; instead 3175
Of giving crowns God gives your actual head.

The king once blamed those slaves' lord and had bound
His hands and feet, then brought his slaves around
And tortured them before he said, 'Show me
Your master's hidden gold immediately!
Tell me his secret, base ones, all of you,
Or I'll cut off your tongues and your throats too!
He tortured them for one whole month—all night
And day the rack, pain, torment: what a plight!
He started cutting them, but not one slave 3180
Would tell his secret—he's the one they'll save.
The dervish heard a voice in his dream say:
'First learn to be a slave, then come this way!'
You who've ripped Joseph's shirt should then know too,
It's your own fault if that wolf now kills you.*
Wear all year round what you weave here yourself.
Eat all year round what you sow here yourself.
These constant sufferings are all your own reaping:
'*The ink has dried*' has this specific meaning.
My principle won't shun the righteous ones: 3185
Good ones to good ones, bad ones to bad ones.
Work hard because King Solomon is living—
While you remain a devil, his sword's winning.
When you become an angel there's no fear
Of Solomon and his sword, as it's clear
He rules the devils not the angels and
Strife is not in the heavens, but on land.
Abandon fatalism for it's empty,
So you may know the mystery of the mystery:
Quit fatalism of a lazy mind 3190
To learn about a very dearer kind.

Abandon being loved—be of the lovers,
You who think you are better than the others.
You who're more silent than the night, why bother

Looking for customers for words you utter?
 Although they nod their heads in front of you,
 You're wasting time to please them as you do.
 Why do you say to me now, 'Don't be jealous!'

How can someone who loses naught be envious?
 Shameless one, teaching those who have no worth 3195
 Is drawing patterns on a clod of earth.
 Teach yourself love and insight, for that made
 A pattern on *a huge rock* that won't fade.
 Your soul's your pupil who is loyal. When
 The others fade where will you seek them then?
 In order to make others great and knowing
 You're making yourself empty and appalling.
 The time your heart joins Eden here eventually
 Then speak up and don't fear becoming empty—
 The order '*Be!*'* came to that one to say: 3200
 'This ocean won't diminish—speak away!'

'*Be silent!*'* means don't waste on jest your water
 Because the orchard's dry-lipped. That's the order.
 This discourse could go on and on, my friend—
 Quit this dry discourse and look to the end!
 Am I now jealous that they stand before you?
 They're mocking—they're not lovers who adore you!
 Observe lovers beyond God's bounty's veil
 Who shout for you continually and wail.
 So be the lover of those who're unseen! 3205
 Don't cherish those who last mere days, though seen.
 They've used you up with falseness and attraction.
 For years you haven't got from them a fraction.
 Why wearily traverse the vulgar way
 When it cannot fulfil you anyway?
 When you are well all are your friends, but when
 In pain and grief, who but God loves you then?
 And when your teeth are hurting and your eyes,
 Who will reach out? The One who answers cries.
 Remember then that sickness and take note— 3210
 Like Ayaz, take heed from an old fleece coat.
 The fleece coat which Ayaz held in his hand
 Is your own pain, if you can understand.

*The infidel determinist again answers the Sunni who invited him to Islam and to abandon his belief in determinism. The debate becomes prolonged on both sides, for only real love which has no self-interest in it can solve it: 'And that is God's Grace, which He bestows on whom He wishes.'**

The fatalist began to answer next.

This made the first debater feel perplexed,

But if I tell you all of this debate

Starting my discourse will then have to wait.

We have more vital things to say to you

Through which your understanding gains a clue.

I've said a little of their argument:

3215

In a small part the whole is evident.

There will be till the world ends such debates

Between the two views and their advocates.

If one could not defend against the other

That view would have completely vanished, brother.

Not finding a good answer for their question,

They would have fled the way of their destruction.

Pursuing their own path was destined thus:

The Nurturing God gives proofs to them, like us,

So they'll not listen to the other view

3220

And thus stay blocked from their good fortune too,

So all those seventy-two sects should stay

In the world till the *Resurrection Day*.*

The realm of darkness and of absence here

Requires the earth as shadow. Thus, it's clear

Till Resurrection seventy-two are staying,

With constant chatter while they're innovating.

The precious value of the treasury

Is clear from locks on it for all to see.

The destination's greatness, trusted men,

3225

Is clear from all its twists and highwaymen.

The Kaaba's greatness and the crowds' converging

Is shown by the vast desert's Bedouin's robbing.

Corrupt creeds' paths have very narrow passes,

Barriers and robbers who steal from the masses.

This path has turned into the other's foe—

The imitator's mixed up and can't know:
 He sees sincerity in either way
 And each group pleased with his own path today.
 If they've no answer, they'll stick stubbornly 3230
 To the same view for all eternity,
 Saying: 'Our greats knew all the answers here,
 Although right now for us they aren't clear.'

Love is the only muzzle for distractions—
 What else has stopped such whispers from their actions?
 Seek out a fair beloved—be a lover,
 Hunt water-fowl from one stream to another!
 How will you get it from the person who
 Steals yours—your water and your knowledge too?
 Beyond intelligibles here, through this love 3235
 You'll find intelligible things from above.
 Beyond this intellect God has some others
 Directing heavenly causes for us, brothers:
 You earn a living with this one; with that one
 The heavenly sphere turns to your rug to squat on.
 He'll give you even more if you should gamble
 Your intellect for love of the Eternal.
 Some women gambled intellects away
 And rushed to Joseph's love's pavilion's way.*
 Life's cupbearer then stole their power of reason— 3240
 With wisdom they became full from that season.
 The source of countless Josephs is God's beauty—
 If you're not less than women serve It truly!
 Soul, love alone can cut short disputations
 For it will rescue you in conversations:
 Love stupefies their eloquence, which lacks
 The courage to confront it with attacks—
 It fears that if it answers back at all
 Out of its mouth a precious pearl might fall.
 It seals its mouth to good and evil so 3245
 No pearl will fall out of its mouth below.
 The Prophet's own companions gave this message:
 "The Prophet would read a Qur'anic passage

And, at the time of scattering generously
The pearls, he wanted presence, gravity.
It's like a bird is perched upon your head
And your soul trembles through a sense of dread
That it might leave, so you can't move or sway
In case that lovely bird should fly away—
You don't breathe out, you stifle your cough too, 3250
So your Homa won't soar away from you.
If someone says to you sweet words or bitter,
To say, 'Hush, please!' you touch lips with your finger.
Bewilderment's that bird: it's silenced you,
Closing the lid, boiling you inside too.

How the king asked Ayaz, 'Are you telling the feeling of grief and joy to an old boot and a fleece coat, which are inanimate?' to get Ayaz to speak.

'Ayaz what are these marks on your boots here
Like lovers' on the idol they revere?
You've made your boots a faith in the same way
Majnun had done with Layli's face one day.
You've tied your love to two things that are old 3255
And hung them in a closet too, I'm told.
How long will you say fresh words to that pair
And breathe the secret to inert things there?'

Ayaz, you draw your words out lengthily
Like Arabs on campsites nostalgically.*
Which Asaf do your boots remind of now?*

It seems your fleece is Joseph's shirt somehow?
Like Christians who confess to priests who hear
All of their sins and hatred of that year,
So that the priest forgives, since his forgiveness 3260
In their eyes is the same as God's forgiveness.
The priest is not aware of sin and pardon,
But love's bewitching with its strong conviction—
Love can make Josephs with imagination,
Excel Harut and Marut as magician.

They show a form evoking him and after
 Attraction to the form gets you to chatter:
 You'll tell the form a million secrets then
 The way one tells his best friend among men.
 No form or shape is there, yet it produces 3265
 A hundred '*Am I not?*'s a hundred '*Yes!*'s,*
 Like a heartbroken mother who has cried
 Next to the grave of her child who has died:
 She now tells secrets, deeply passionate—
 She sees as living what's inanimate.
 She deems the soil as living, with an ear
 And eye although it's just soil that is here.
 Each lump of that grave's soil has consciousness
 And ears to hear when she's impassioned thus.
 She thinks the soil is listening actually— 3270
 Now look what a magician love can be!
 On that fresh grave she has let her head drop
 With massive tears that flow and never stop.
 During his life she'd never placed so near
 Her face to her son's face, though he was dear.
 After a few days' mourning has soon passed
 The fire of her love dies and does not last.
 (Love for the dead does not last—save your love
 For that Alive One who leads souls above.)
 The graveside makes her sleep eventually: 3275
 A lifeless thing made her act similarly,
 For love has taken its spell and moved on—
 Ash is all that is left once flames have gone.

In a mere brick the Elder can still view
 All you see in a mirror facing you.
 The Elder is your love, not white beard hair—
 He gives a hand to thousands in despair.
 Love will create forms during separation,
 The Formless One will rise up, though, in union:
 'I'm consciousness and drunkenness's source: 3280
 My beauty's what you see in forms, of course.
 Now I have drawn the veils off finally—

Beauty's seen with no intermediary:
 Since you've been so engaged with My reflection,
 Gained strength thus for My Essence's inspection,
 When My attraction pulls from this side, then
 The priest's no longer seen by Christian men.'
 Instead now they seek pardon in his place
 Beyond that veil, directly from God's grace.
 When a spring gushes from a rock it's clear
 Within the spring the rock will disappear:
 No one will call it 'rock' now since that essence
 Flowed from the rock and overwhelmed its presence.
 Comparable to bowls are forms this side—
 They're made sublime by what God pours inside.

3285

*Majnun's relatives said, 'Layli's beauty is limited. It's not so great.
 There are many more lovely than her in our town. We'll show you
 one or two of them. Take your choice and release yourself and us!'
 Majnun answers them.*

The stupid said to Majnun once, 'Your Layli
 Is fair, but not exceptionally lovely.
 There are a million radiant sweethearts here
 In our town who are lovelier and it's clear.'
 'The form's the flagon; beauty is the wine.
 Through her form, God gives me wine that's so fine.
 He gave you from the flagon vinegar,
 So you'd not get pulled by your ears to her.'
 Glorious God's hand gives honey and gives poison
 From the same pot according to the person.
 You see the vessel, but that wine will not
 Show its face to such an unwholesome lot.
 Mystic taste's *women who look modestly*,*
 Showing the spouses signs exclusively.
 The *women who look modestly** are wine,
 Their vessels veil like tents, dear friend of mine.
 The sea is tent-like: ducks can live therein
 But it means death for crows if they dive in.
 Venom supports the snakes, but then again
 To all the others it means death and pain.

3290

3295

Every bounty's and every trial's form, brother,
Is hell to one and heaven to another.

Therefore each single body that *you see*
Has food and poison in it *you don't see*.*

Our body's like a pot and it contains 3300
Both nourishment and what brings inner pains.

The bowl's seen, blessings hidden—one partaking
Will know exactly what it is he's tasting.

Joseph's form was just like a lovely goblet—
His father drank a hundred fine wines from it.

It was just poison for his brothers though
Since it just made their spite and rage both grow.

Zolaikha that time got drunk on it too,
Through a rare opium from love, which she drew:
From Joseph she received a nourishment, 3305
As Jacob did, but hers was different.

Different drinks although the flagon's one,
So no doubt's left about Unseen Wine. None.

The jar's from this world, wine from the Unseen
The jar is visible; its wine's not seen,

Hidden within from the uninitiated,
Yet crystal clear to the initiated.

*O God, our eyes have got drunk now we're merry.
Forgive us, but our burden is so heavy.*

O Hidden One, You've filled the East and West, 3310
Yet You're above the light from East and West,

*A secret who reveals our secrets too,
The force that causes streams to gush is You.*

*Your essence hidden, Your gifts are perceived.
You're water; we're the millstone that received,*

*Or You're the wind and we're dust that is blown:
The wind is hidden, but the dust is shown.*

You are the spring; like orchards we are green—
He's hidden yet His gifts are clearly seen.

If we are hands and feet, You are the soul— 3315
The hand's own movement's in the soul's control.

You are like intellect; we're tongues—reflect
On how tongues gain their speech from intellect.

You are like joy; we're laughter that is best—

It's the result of joy that's truly blest.
 'I testify!' * says every move we make
 For the Eternal, Glorious One's sake.
 The millstone says, 'I testify!' * when moved
 So that the stream's existence can be proved.
 You are beyond speech and conception—please 3320
 Put me to shame with all my similes!
 The slave can't hold back from your fair depiction;
 'May my soul be your carpet!' is its mission,
 Just like that shepherd* who said, 'God, come here
 Before your shepherd lover! You're so dear.
 So I can find fleas in your shirt and kill them,
 Then stitch your boots together, kiss your coat hem.'
 No one could equal him in love and passion,
 Though he fell short when praising in that fashion.
 His love had pitched its tent up in the sky; 3325
 The soul became his tent's guard dog on high.
 When love of God's sea surged, it struck his heart,
 But only struck your ear—how far apart!*

*Story about the male prankster Johi wearing a chador, sitting
 among the women during a preacher's sermon and moving around.*

A woman discovers that it's a man and screams.

There was once a well-spoken preacher, who
 Had women gathered near him, and men too.
 Johi, a man, dressed as a woman there
 In purdah so the rest stayed unaware.
 Someone then asked the preacher: 'Pubic hairs—
 Do they invalidate my daily prayers?'
 The preacher said: 'If pubic hairs are long 3330
 Then, yes, for prayers your growing them is wrong—
 So that your prayers can be now deemed approved
 Shave them or with a cream have them removed!'
 The questioner asked, 'How long must pubic hairs
 Have grown before invalidating prayers?'
 He said, 'The length of one small barley grain—
 If they've grown that much, shave them off again!'

Johi, in purdah, asked a woman near:
 'Sister, please check my pubic hairs right here.
 For God's sake reach down with your hand to see 3335
 If they're too long already, helpfully.'
 She reached into his trousers as he'd planned
 Then felt his penis rub against her hand.
 The woman screamed aloud in shock and dread—
 'My speech has touched her heart!' the preacher said.
 'No, not her heart, her hand!' Johi yelled out,
 'If it had touched her heart there'd be no doubt.'
 Pharaoh's magicians' hearts were touched by God
 Then saw as one Moses's hand and rod.*
 Snatch walking sticks from old men and you'll see 3340
 Them suffer more than that group previously:
 Their cry '*There's no harm*'* reached the heavens, ringing,
 'Chop off our limbs. The soul is freed from suffering.
 We've learnt we're not the body; we endure
 Through God beyond the body. We are sure.'
 The one who knows his essence is so lucky—
 He's built a palace in eternity's sanctuary.
 Children will cry for nuts and raisins, but
 Wise men know they are trivial things to cut.
 Body is nuts and raisins to the heart; 3345
 A child can't learn men's knowledge—tell apart:
 The one who's veiled is just a child, still small,
 While actual men possess no doubts at all.
 If testicles and beards make men of you,
 Billy goats have long beards and much hair too.
 That kind of goat is a bad leader—he
 Leads others to the butcher rapidly.
 He's combed his beard and thought, 'I am ahead!'
 Ahead only for grief and falling dead!
 Choose this path and abandon now the beard! 3350
 Leave ego and the troubled thoughts you'd feared,
 So you'll become for lovers rose scent too,
 The guide inside the rose-garden who's true.
 What is the rose scent? It's the breath of wisdom,
 The guide that leads to the eternal kingdom.

Shah Mahmud tells Ayaz once more, 'Clearly explain your boots and fleece coat so your fellow servants can gain advice from the teachings of that since 'religion is counsel' according to the Prophet.

'Ayaz, tell me the secret! What is this?

Before such boots you're showing neediness?

My other servants then might learn from you

The secret of the boots and fleece cloak too.

Slavery now has gained light from you and

3355

Light rises to the heavens from low land.

Slavery's now the envy of the free

For you have given life to slavery.

The ones who in life's ups and downs believe

Make infidels regret their lack and grieve.

*Story about an infidel in the time of Bayazid who was told,
'Become a Muslim!' and his answer to them.*

In Bayazid's time once a Muslim told

A non-believer to 'come to the fold':

'Why not become a Muslim now like me

To gain salvation and great majesty?'

He answered, 'If this faith that you profess

3360

Is Bayazid's, the whole world's shaikh no less,

I wouldn't cope with its heat: I don't dare

As that is much more than my soul can bear.

Though I'm not sure about faith, still I can

Say I avow the faith of that pure man.

I've faith his is the highest of them all,

So glorious and fine it can enthrall.

And I believe in his faith secretly

Although a seal shuts my mouth totally.

But if it's your faith that you have in mind,

3365

I have no wish for weak faith of that kind.

People who are inclined, once they have seen

Belief like your belief, feel much less keen:

They see a name that has no meaning oddly,

Like calling deserts "safe escapes" absurdly.

On seeing your faith, if the truth be told,
His keenness to profess belief turns cold.'

*Story about the muezzin with a horrible voice who gave the call to
prayer in the region of Non-Muslims and to whom one of their
members gave a gift.*

Once a muezzin whose voice wasn't pretty
Would give the call in a Non-Muslim city.
'Don't say the call to prayer,' they begged, 'It's frightening 3370
As this will lead to enmity and fighting!'
Not heeding them, he disregarded prudence
And gave the call in that non-Muslim province.
Men feared a civil war across this land.
Then a Non-Muslim came with robe in hand,
Halva and candle also, suddenly,
As if a friend, as happy as can be,
Asking, 'Where's that muezzin? Let me know—
The one whose prayer call makes my pleasure grow.'
'What pleasure from that ugly voice we hated?' 3375
'His voice reached our church,' then the man related,
'I have a daughter who is fair and charming—
She wanted to convert, which was alarming.
The passionate fervour wouldn't leave her head.
Non-Muslims gave her counsel, but instead
In her heart grew love of Islam's belief—
I was the aloes wood, my censer grief:
I suffered so much pain and agony
Because she was being drawn there constantly.
I knew of no solution. I'd despair 3380
Till that muezzin made the call to prayer:
My daughter said, "That sound's detestable—
What am I hearing that's so terrible?
In my whole life I've never heard a sound
So ugly in this church when I've been round."
Her sister said, "That is the call to prayer:
It is a Muslim practice, so beware!"
She doubted her and asked another near:

That person said, "She is correct, my dear."
Her face turned pale once she found out it's true 3385
And she got turned off turning Muslim too.
Rescued from torment and anxiety,
Last night I slept without fear, peacefully.
This is the joy his voice gave me. I've brought
Him gifts in thanks—where is the man I've sought?'
On spotting him, 'Accept this gift!' he said,
'Since you've saved and protected me from dread.
The kind act you have carried out for me
Has made me your own slave eternally.
If I had wealth and property, I would 3390
Fill your mouth up with gold now—it's that good.'

Your faith is falseness and hypocrisy—
Like that prayer call it waylays terribly.
In admiration of great Bayazid
And his true faith, my soul regrets indeed,
You're like that one who had sex with a donkey.*
She said, 'Ah, what a peerless stallion fucks me!
If this is sex, the champions are the donkeys;
Our husbands' thrusts are shit inside our pussies!'
Bayazid gave all that true faith would need— 3395
Bravo to that unique lion, Bayazid!
A drop of his faith enters in the sea
And that sea drowns in it incredibly.
A tiny spark lights in a jungle and
The jungle gets consumed by it: burned land.
A king or army has a fantasy
And it destroys that wartime enemy.
A star shone through Mohammad's face and made
The Jews and Magians' essences both fade.*
Those who gained faith entered security; 3400
Others' denial would grow increasingly.
Their previous unbelief did not stay here—
It sowed new Muslimness or a new fear.
This is a superficial rendering.
Motes can't compare to his faith, for that thing,

The mote's a wretched body, miserable.

It's not the *sun that's indivisible*.

My mentioning motes has a concealed aim too—

You're mere foam, and the ocean's far from you.

If the Shaikh's faith's bright sun should once display 3405

From the East of his soul its faith, they say

All men below would gain a treasure and

Above they'd gain a verdant, heavenly land.

He has a soul of luminous light and he

Has his own earthly body equally—

I wonder if he's this or that? Tell, uncle,

For I am stuck deciphering this puzzle!

If he's this, brother, what's that? Which is right?

The seven heavens are filled with his light.

If he's the soul, what is the body, friend? 3410

I wonder which one he is in the end?

Story about the woman who told her husband, 'The cat ate the meat.' The husband put the cat on the weighing scales and saw that the cat weighed half a mann unit of weight. He said, 'Wife, the meat weighed at least half a mann. If this amount of weight is the meat's, where is the cat? If it is the cat, where is the meat?'

There was a wife once of a household head

Who was deceptive, vile, and stole instead.

He'd bring things and she'd use them up so quickly.

The man had to keep silent, so unlucky.

That man brought meat once for a guest to savour,

Which he'd acquired through much demanding labour.

His wife ate it with wine so greedily.

Her spouse came; she rebuffed deceitfully:

He said, 'Our guest's here. Where's the meat right now? 3415

We must serve a good meal to him somehow.'

'The cat ate it, so head back to the store

And buy some meat again if they have more!'

He told a servant, 'Bring the balance here

To weigh the cat, which should make matters clear!'

The cat weighed only half a *mann*. He said:

‘Deceitful woman, that cat’s not been fed
With meat I bought—if you’re right, then how can
The cat right now itself weigh half a *mann*?
If this weight is the cat’s, where is the meat?
If it’s the meat, how is the cat complete?’ 3420

If Bayazid’s the body, what’s the soul?
If he’s the soul, what is this man’s form’s role?
It’s so perplexing friend—it’s not for you
Or me to understand. We have no clue.
He is both, yet for crops the seed’s the key—
Leaves are derivative and secondary.
Wisdom has brought these opposites together:
The thigh meat with the neck meat now, O butcher!
The soul can’t cope without the body, but 3425
The soulless body’s cold, inanimate.
Your body’s seen, your soul is out of view:
Causes in this world are set by these two.
By throwing soil you won’t break someone’s head,
By splashing water neither—but instead
If you mix soil and water you will see
It will then break the man’s head easily.
Once it breaks, water goes back to its source
And soil to soil eventually of course.
God’s wisdom through our human unions is 3430
To show both neediness and stubbornness.
But there are other marriages as well
*Which no ear hears and no eye sees to tell.**
If the ear hears how can it stay an ear?
How can it hear more talking still down here?
If ice and snow were to perceive the sun
They’d give up frozenness, their course now run—
They’d turn to water with no ripples in it;
David-like air would make some chainmail with it.
Water’s the cure for every tree’s survival, 3435
Each benefiting from its flow’s arrival,
But frozen ice stays inside its own body
And it tells every tree it sees: ‘*Don’t touch me!*’

*Its body has no friends because of this;
 Its share is naught but selfish avarice.
 It's not a waste though—livers will revive—
 Though it won't herald verdure that will thrive.*

'You are a star, Ayaz. All constellations
 Aren't worthy of its passage. Aspirations
 You have mean you don't rate their loyalty, 3440
 And how should yours rate others' purity?'

Story about the prince who told his slave to fetch wine. The slave went and headed back with a jugful. On the way an ascetic told him to act righteously and threw a stone to break the jug. The prince heard about this and resolved to chastise the ascetic. (This was in the epoch of Jesus's religion when wine had still not been forbidden, but the ascetic was showing disgust and preventing enjoyment.)

There was a joyful prince who loved wine. He
 Was all hard-pressed and drunk men's sanctuary,
 Considerate, kind to the poor, and fair,
 Gold-giving, ocean-hearted, jewel so rare,
 Commander of the faithful, monarch too,
 Knower of secrets, sentry, friend who's true.
 He lived in Jesus's time and harmed none,
 Gentle and so adored by everyone.
 Another prince came as a guest and he 3445
 Lived in a joyful manner, similarly.
 They needed wine to feel good and wine then
 Was lawful and permitted for all men.
 Then short of wine, the prince called, 'Slave, please go
 Have our jug filled by that one whom you know:
 That monk with special wine, so our souls then
 Can be relieved of every stress again.'
 One gulp from that monk's jug can do more than
 A thousand vats of regular wine can.
 There's something hidden in that wine that's special; 3450
 It's like the cloaks that can make people regal—
 Don't judge the cloak that's tattered. Truth be told

They've simply smeared some black stuff over gold—
The evil eye makes it seem bad to you:

That ruby looks smoke-tarnished in your view.
Since when are treasures found so easily?

They're found in ruins where most men can't see.
Adam's treasure was likewise out of view:

His body was that cursed one's blindfold too.
He viewed that bodily clay as weak, not strong: 3455
'My clay blocks you!' the soul said all along.

The slave took two jugs and ran happily

And quickly to the monk's own monastery.
He paid with gold for gold-like wine: he'd brought

A stone and a fine jewel is what he got:
A wine that rushes to the king's head, then

Puts on the Saqi the gold crown of men.
Once fervour and commotion spreads around

Slaves and kings altogether gather round— 3460
Bones disappear with only souls remaining,

Throne and bench equal in this state we're sharing.
When sober they're like oil and water oddly

Once drunk they are like soul inside the body.
They turn *halim*-like:* nothing separate;

All differences are thus submerged in it.

The slave was bringing that wine through the town

To the home of the prince of good renown

When an ascetic faced him suddenly,

One suffering a dry mind in agony: 3465
In the heart's fires his body burned away;

His house removed all but God from the way.

The merciless, gruesome trials that he'd been handed

Meant that for countless times he had been branded.

In every hour his heart would strive to fight,

Busy with power struggles day and night.

He'd suffered greatly for more than a year;

His patience left him that night, as is clear.

He asked, 'What's in the jar?' The slave said, 'Wine.'

He asked, 'Who is the owner, friend of mine?'

'The glorious prince,' the slave said straight away. 3470
 He said, 'Is then the seeker's work this way:
 Seeker of God and drinking to feel bliss
 Satan's wine—from its power lost consciousness?
 Even without wine your wits are so feeble
 That others' wits must help to keep them stable—
 What will they be like when you're drunk, no less,
 You who've been trapped like birds by drunkenness?'

*Story about Ziya Dalq, who was very tall while his brother the
 Shaikh al-Islam Taj of Balkh was extremely short—the latter
 insulted his brother Ziya: once Ziya came to his brother's lecture,
 where all the notables of Balkh were present and he paid his respects
 before walking in. The Shaikh al-Islam only half-rose from his seat
 unusually. Ziya then said, 'Yes, you are of course so tall you can
 afford to show less of your height!'*

Ziya Dalq, an inspired man, had a brother
 Who was a high-ranked preacher like no other:
 Balkh's 'Taj Shaikh al-Islam' was his position, 3475
 And he was small and short just like a chicken,
 Though learned, talented, and manly too,
 But Ziya was the sharper of the two.
 The former short, Ziya was very tall.
 Shaikh al-Islam was proud, showed airs to all,
 And felt ashamed of his own brother Ziya,
 Although he was a rightly-guided preacher.
 Ziya came when his brother held a session,
 The classroom filled with pure men of position.
 The Shaikh al-Islam then in his proud way 3480
 Stood up for his own brother just half-way—
 'Since you're so tall, my brother,' Ziya said,
 'Show a bit more and gain rewards instead!'

Then the ascetic said, 'Where'd your brain go
 To drink wine? You are knowledge's own foe.
 Your face is fair, so why put on dark make-up
 That isn't something Africans need take up.

Lost one, when did light ever enter you
That you sought darkness and to lose wits too?
Seeking shadows in daytime is all right, 3485
But you seek shadows on a cloudy night!
If a drink's lawful for the vulgar, it
Is still banned for God's seekers, isn't it?
The lover's wine is their hearts' blood; their eyes
Stay focused on the path to the goal's prize.
On such a path through very scary climes
Wisdom, the guide, would get veiled countless times.
If you throw dust on your guide's eyes, you'll see
The caravan get lost most dangerously.
Barley bread harms and is forbidden too 3490
For carnal souls—give yours bran bread and you
Keep God's path's enemy abased! You must control it:
The thief deserves the gallows, not the pulpit.
The thief's hands must be chopped off legally—
If you can't do that, bind them carefully.
If you don't you'll be bound—make no mistake:
If you don't break his legs, then yours will break.
Why give the foe some wine and sugar cane?
Damn it! Let it stay bitter once again.'

Then the ascetic threw a stone its way 3495
And smashed the jug. The slave then ran away
Back to the prince: 'Where is the wine?' he said.
He told him what had happened, why he'd fled.

The angry prince goes to chastise the ascetic.

The prince leapt up with fiery rage and said:
'Show me his house, so I can pound his head
With a big club that I have kept in store
For such an ignorant son of a whore!
What does he know about enjoining right?
Just like a cur he's seeking fame tonight,
So by this falseness he'll gain a position 3500
And make himself known for some kind of mission.
He has no other talent, but this one,

Namely acting falsely to everyone.
 If he's insane and wants to trouble me
 An ox's penis is the remedy,
 So Satan leaves his head and what he's done—
 Without being whipped would donkeys ever run?
 With club in hand the prince rushed to the site;
 Half-drunk, he reached his target late that night.
 Enraged, he sought to murder that ascetic, 3505
 Who hid beneath wool, fearing something tragic:
 Hiding under rope-makers' wool, he'd hear
 The things the prince would say once he drew near.
 Only a mirror with a hard face can
 Tell someone to his face: 'You're ugly, man!'
 A steel face like a mirror's would tell you:
 'Look at your ugly face that's in clear view!'

*Story about Dalqak's checkmating the Sayyed
 Shah of Termez.*

The Shah played chess with Dalqak, his court jester,
 Who mated him—the Shah raged in a temper:
 Dalqak said, 'Checkmate!' The proud Shah instead 3510
 Threw all the chess pieces then at his head:
 'Take that, wretch, for your checkmate!' Dalqak stayed
 Most calm: 'Have mercy, please!' is what he said.
 The Shah told him to play again. Not bold,
 Dalqak shook like one naked in the cold.
 The Shah got mated in that second game:
 When the time to say 'Checkmate!' finally came
 Dalqak leapt to a corner that was near,
 Threw linen on himself due to his fear.
 Under some pillows and six throws he lay 3515
 Hiding from the Shah's anger on that day.
 The Shah said, 'What is this? What have you done?'
 He said, 'Distinguished Shah, checkmate! I've won.
 How can one tell the truth and then not hide
 When you're enraged and filled with fire inside?
 You're mated, but I'm, too, by the Shah's blows—
 I'll say "Checkmate!" beneath sheets, so he knows.'

The prince's uproar spread outside as he
Kicked at the door and grabbed things violently.
People rushed out from all around to say: 3520
 'Forgive, superior one! Accept today!
His brain had dried up, and his wisdom now
Was less than that we find in kids somehow.
Dotage has made worse his renunciation
Which didn't lead to any revelation.
He's seen trials, but no treasures from his Lord:
 He has toiled hard, but not seen a reward.
Either the jewel was not there in his labour
 Or recompense's hour will come much later.
Or his toil was like the deniers' kind, 3525
 Or the reward for it just lags behind.
It's pain and bad luck for him that he'll tarry
 All on his own now in a blood-filled valley.
His eyes hurt and he sits there in a nook
 Crestfallen with a very bitter look.
Without an eye doctor to play that role,
 Or knowledge to discover some good kohl,
He strives with guesswork and opinions merely—
 Until that works, it's just 'perhaps' or 'maybe'.
His journey to the Loved One's a long trip 3530
 Since he does not seek Him, but leadership.
Now he reproaches God and is heard muttering:
 'I've worked out that my lot in life is suffering.'
And then he argues with his luck, 'All fly,
 But I have had my wings both severed—why?'

Whoever's trapped in senses such as smell,
 Though world-denying, he's repressed as well.
Until he exits that most cramped cell's door
 How can his soul feel joy, his heart grow more?
One never gives ascetics a sharp blade 3535
 While in retreat before their breakthrough's made,
Since they'd tear their own stomachs for relief
 From anguish, disappointment, pain, and grief.

How the Prophet Mohammad threw himself down from Mount Hira due to the hard challenge of Gabriel's appearing to him so late, and Gabriel's appeasing him by saying: 'Don't cast yourself down from the many fortunes that await you!'*

Mohammad when he felt apart and weak

Would want to jump off a high mountain peak

Till Gabriel would say: 'Don't do that! You'll see

Much fortune coming through the order 'Be!'

Although Mohammad would at first refrain

Severance would leave him feeling weak again—

He'd feel prepared to jump off for relief

3540

Headfirst from that tall mountain due to grief,

Then Gabriel would return to say, 'Don't fling

Yourself from there! You are a peerless king.'

It carried on until the veil was lifted

And from within he gained the jewel that's gifted.

Since people kill themselves from trials, compare it:

This is the source of all trials—who could bear it?

Men are amazed by life-risking attackers*

But we're all sacrificing in our manners.

Happy the man who sacrificed the body

3545

All for the sake of something that is worthy.

All can self-sacrifice and in that way

Spend their whole life, before being killed one day,

Killed in the East or West where neither yearner

Nor the thing that is yearned for last much longer.

The fortunate man's devoted to being skilled

In this—more lives are gained through being killed.

Love, lover, and Beloved will keep living—

In both worlds they're renowned and they are prospering.

Pity the lustful, O munificent ones!

3550

Their state is of repetitive destructions.

The crowd said, 'Prince, forgive him and refrain!

Consider his misfortune and his pain,

So God will then forgive your sins like his

And add a pardon for your blemishes.

You've broken many jugs while you were heedless
 And set your heart on gaining full forgiveness—
 Forgive so you can be forgiven too!
 Fate calculates what it deals out to you.'

The prince answers those neighbours of the ascetic interceding for him: 'Why was he so impudent? Why did he break my jug of wine? I will not accept intercession in this matter, as I have sworn to give him what he deserves.'

'Who is he to throw stones?' the prince then said, 3555
 'To break my jug and not feel any dread?
 Even fierce lions, if they should come near,
 They do with caution since I'm one they fear.
 Why did he hurt my slave's heart and embarrass
 Me, too, before my guest back at the palace?
 He spilled drinks better than our blood and he
 Has fled, like women, somewhere sneakily.
 How will he save his life? If he should fly
 High up the way a bird soars in the sky,
 I'd fire an arrow of my wrath and tear 3560
 His useless wings apart without a care.
 If he heads to the big rocks when he flees
 I'll drag him out of those big rocks with ease,
 Then start to beat his body as a warning
 To every scoundrel of what will be coming.
 He showed to all of us hypocrisy—
 I'll give him and his kind their due. Watch me!
 Bloodthirsty anger overwhelmed him then.
 Fire spilled from his mouth scaring other men.

*For a second time the interceding neighbours kiss the hands
 and feet of the prince and appeal.*

The intercessors, due to this commotion, 3565
 Kissed both his hands and feet to then petition:
 'Spite doesn't suit you, prince, although that wine
 Has all been lost. Without it you're still fine.

The wine acquires its value from your goodness;
 Water's pureness wishes it had your pureness.
 Act like a king—forgive him, merciful one,
 O noble one, son of a noble one!
 All wines are slaves to your fine form and face;
 All drunks are envious of you in this place.
 You have no need for red wine's rosiness— 3570
 Leave that, for you're the actual rosiness.
 Your Venus-like cheek's brighter than the sun;
 Rosiness near your colour feels outdone.
 Wine bubbling in the jar invisibly
 Bubbles through yearning for your face to see.
 You're the whole ocean—why desire some dew?
 You are all being—why seek non-being too?
 Bright moon, why do you want the dust below?
 The moon seems yellow next to your bright glow.
 "We've honoured"* has now placed its crown on you; 3575
 From your breast hangs the chain of "We gave you".*
 You're lovely and the source of loveliness.
 Why feel towards mere wine such neediness?
 The essence: Man. This world: the accident,
 Like branch and rung while he's the goal in front.
 Wisdom and reason are your slaves, so why
 Sell yourself cheaply when your value's high?
 All creatures must serve you—how should an essence
 Seek help from accidents? That would be nonsense.
 You're seeking knowledge still from books, alas! 3580
 You seek sweet taste from halva still, alas!
 Wisdom's sea's hidden in a drop of dew,
 A vast world in a tiny body too.
 What's music, wine, or sex for you tonight
 To seek from them some gain and some delight?
 So should the sun seek loans from motes today?
 Should Venus seek wine from a jar of clay?
 Your soul's beyond descriptions; all the same
 You're trapped here, the eclipsed sun—what a shame!

The prince answers them again.

He said, 'I'm wine's companion. You're in error. 3585
I'm not content with one taste of this pleasure.
I want a wine that makes me swing and sway
Like jasmine flowers, this way then that way.
Released from fear and hope, I then may follow
By swaying all around just like a willow:
Like willow branches swaying left and right
Which, due to wind, are dancing now in sight.
One who conforms to such wine's joyousness—
How can he be content then with just this?'
Prophets left such joys since they were immersed 3590
In the divine joy, which they rated first.
Their souls had seen the others' gaiety,
But that just seemed to them frivolity—
Why would one choose befriending a dead rival
When one's been near an actual living idol?

Exegesis of 'The next realm is real life, if they but knew.' The gate, wall, and area of that world and its waters, pitchers, fruits, and trees are all alive and they speak and hear. Referring to that, the Prophet Mohammad said, 'They call something a carcass because of its being dead, not because of its bad smell and filthiness.'*

Each atom of the other world is living:
They all can understand and they're conversing.
In this world great ones have no peace—its fodder
Is only fit for cattle to eat, brother.
Someone who has a rosegarden would not 3595
Drink wine in furnace rooms with what he's got.
Pure spirit's home is 'Elliyin';* the fit
For the mere worm is homes built inside shit.
Those drunk on God have the pure, cleansing cup;
The blind birds drink the briny water up.
Just those who'd not seen Omar's fair rule trust
That bloodthirsty Hajjaj's rule was just.*
Small girls are given lifeless dolls for play
Since they've not played with live things in that way.

A wooden sword is better for a toddler 3600
 Until they gain more strength when they grow taller.
 Christians are satisfied with portraits shown
 In monasteries, although they're lifeless stone—
 Since we see golden eras from such men
 Mere shadows cannot satisfy us then.
 One of his forms is sitting here, the other
 Is like the lofty moon in that realm, brother.
 One mouth tells fine points here to someone near
 The other talks with God Who holds him dear.
 His outer ear receives speech normally; 3605
 His inner ear hears secrets of God's '*Be!*'*
 His outer eye sees human forms down here;
 His inner eye's stunned through '*his eyes don't veer*'.*
 In the prayer row his outer feet are standing;
 Above the heavens inner feet are circling.
 Count every part of him like this: each one
 Is in time while beyond's a mystic one.
 The former lasts till death comes finally,
 The other is part of eternity.
 '*Governor of two states*': one of his titles, 3610
 Another is '*Imam of the two qiblas*'.*
 He doesn't need seclusion or withdrawal;
 No darkening cloud hangs over him at all.
 This man's retreat is the sun's orb—how can
 The night, that stranger, veil him then, good man?
 Sickness and caution gone, crisis diverted,
 His unbelief's faith. Unbelief's been thwarted.
 He's at the front, like 'A', through steadfastness;
 He's lost his attributes, with which he'd dress.
 He's separate now from his own wishes and 3615
 His soul's gone to Him who makes it expand.
 Naked in front of that Unique King there
 Who gives it holy attributes to wear.
 It wears a robe of that King's qualities.
 It flies from pit to palace now with ease—
 When dregs become pure that is what you witness:
 They rise from the bowl's bottom to the surface.
 At the bowl's base bad luck made his soul stay,

Mixed with terrestrial parts of him in clay;
Its mean companion tied its wings both up, 3620
Or else it would at once have soared straight up.
When the rebuke came, telling it: '*Go down!*'*
Like Harut they then hung it upside down.
Harut of heaven's angels previously
Was hung like this due to rebuke, you see:
Hung upside down for straying from the head,
Claiming headship and going alone instead.
A basket filled with water had the notion
Of self-sufficiency, then left the ocean;
Not one drop was left in it naturally— 3625
The ocean called it back compassionately:
A favour without cause, nor for work done,
That's from the ocean—a blessed hour for one.
By all means gather on the shore, although
The people there are pale—God might bestow
Through His kind grace some jewellery anyway
And give your pale face colour in this way.

The best complexion is one pale and sallow
Since it's from hope of meeting God tomorrow.
Bright, beaming cheeks in contrast are so ruddy 3630
Because the soul is so content already.
Hope makes one thin, pale with humility—
This person's ailment isn't bodily.
Even Galen, on seeing a pale face,
Would then expect a sickness he can trace.
When you have also fixed hope on God's light
Mohammad's words: '*His self's abased*' are right.
Light with no shade is lofty and so lovely—
You're still embroiled if your own light is patchy.
Naked lovers all want the naked body— 3635
Clothes can stay on for impotent men only.
The food is for those fasting; for the fly
The trivet's like the soup as it darts by.

The king appeals to Ayaz again: 'Explain your action and solve the puzzle for the deniers and the blamers, for it is not considerate to leave them in confusion.'

This speech is limitless, beyond all measure:
 'Ayaz, tell me about your states! A treasure
 Brought from the mine of newness? How can you
 Be satisfied with states you're here used to?
 Relate to us those fine states and conditions—
 To hell with our states and talk of dimensions!' 3640
 'Though inward states can't be related truly
 I'll tell about the outward state now fully:
 Death's bitterness was altered by God's grace
 To be like candy for my soul to face,
 And if that sugar's dust could reach the sea
 Its bitterness would turn sweet totally.
 A million states reached me just like this one
 Then went back to the Unseen, O true one!
 Each day states different than the previous day—
 Like flowing rivers they each pass away.
 Each day's thought is a different kind; through thought 3645
 Each single day a new effect is brought.'

Comparison of the human being to a guesthouse and different thoughts to different guests. The mystic, content with those thoughts of sorrow or joy, is like a hospitable person who is kind to strangers, like Abraham, for Abraham's door was always open to receive guests with generosity, for unbeliever and believer, the trustworthy and the treacherous alike, and he showed a fresh face to all guests.

The body is a guesthouse and each morning
 A new guest comes into the guesthouse, running.
 Don't say that they are burdensome somehow
 Or they'll go back to Non-existence now.
 Whatever comes to you from yonder realm
 They're all your guests—be a good host to them!

Story about the guest concerning whom the wife of the master of the house said, 'It's raining and we are stuck with the guest.'

A man came at a bad time as a guest;
The host housed him and gave him what was best.
He laid a feast on for him generously. 3650
A party was being held then locally.
Secretly to his wife the host then said:
‘Tonight, wife, make two beds, not just one bed:
Roll out a mattress by the entrance door
And on the other side roll out one more.’
His wife said, ‘Glad to serve, you know. To hear
Is to obey, light of my eyes, sweet dear!’
She made the beds and then she left there promptly
To go to the big circumcision party.
Her husband stayed there with the guest to eat— 3655
He served him every kind of lavish treat.
Till midnight this pair talked about the past,
The good and bad, until that hour had passed.
The guest got sleepy and could not chat more—
He went towards the mattress by the door.
The husband thought it too rude to make clear:
‘Your bed is on the other side, right here—
For you we’ve rolled a mattress out already
On that side, so you’ll sleep just like a baby.’
The plan that he’d made with his wife before 3660
Was ruined as the guest slept by the door.
It rained so heavily that night the crowds
Were stunned by the huge thickness of the clouds.
The wife arrived home thinking that her partner
Was by the door, their guest in the far corner.
Naked, she slipped beneath the blanket there
And kissed with lust the guest, still unaware:
‘Big man, this is what I had feared,’ she said,
‘And now it’s happened just as I did dread.
The rain and mud have stranded here our guest, 3665
So he’ll remain a burden and a pest,
For how can he leave in the mud and rain?
A burden on your head, he will remain.’

The guest got up from bed immediately:
 'Stop woman, I have boots. Mud won't stop me!
 Don't worry! I will leave immediately.
 May one's soul never get filled up with glee,
 So it can reach its actual home much earlier:
 Rejoicing waylays every single traveler.'
 The wife regretted saying things unfeeling 3670
 Once that distinguished guest said he was leaving:
 She said, 'Don't get upset, O princely guest
 Because of my well-meaning little jest!
 Her begging didn't work: he went away
 And left them feeling bad he didn't stay.
 That couple mourned by wearing blue thereafter;
 They viewed him as a candle without holder—
 He went off and the desert, through his light,
 Was spared of total darkness late at night.
 The husband made his home a guesthouse also, 3675
 Ashamed of what occurred and filled with sorrow.
 The image of the guest would mystically
 Say through a hidden route continually:
 'I am Khezzr's friend: I'd have bestowed for free
 Much treasure, but that's not your destiny.'

*Comparison of everyday thoughts that come to one's mind with new
 guests who from the start of the day arrive at the house and behave
 in a bad-tempered and demanding way with the master of the house.
 The virtue of being hospitable and putting up with the guest's airs.*

Each moment, like an honoured guest, a thought
 Enters your breast, and every day they're brought.
 O soul, deem each a person and no less,
 For thought's what gives a person worthiness.
 If a sad thought waylays the joy you're feeling, 3680
 It's readying for joy you'll soon be seeing,
 Sweeping the house of all else with much force
 So new joy comes from goodness's own source.
 From the heart's branch it shakes off yellow leaves
 So it will grow from now on fresh green leaves.
 And it uproots the root of old joys so

New savour from beyond instead might grow.
 Grief pulls up rotten roots to show to you
 The other root they've covered up from view.
 Whatever grief spills from the heart it then 3685
 Brings something better in its place again.
 For those with certainty especially:
 'Grief is the slave of those with certainty.'

The clouds and lightning frown once in a while
 So vines won't get burned by the sun's hot smile.
 Good and bad luck can be guests in your heart
 Like stars that enter one house then depart.
 When it comes to your heart's house, you should be
 Like its ascendant: sweet in harmony,
 So when it joins the moon it will then sing 3690
 Your praises warmly to the heart's own king.
 For a full seven years Job showed contentment
 And patience with 'God's guest' despite the torment,
 So, when that stern-faced one would go back, it
 Would praise him there before God, as was fit:
 'Job never frowned at me,' that guest would say,
 'Due to love, though to kill what's loved's my way.'
 Before God's knowledge, out of loyalty
 And shame, he stayed sweet facing agony.
 When a new thought comes in your breast, then meet it 3695
 With smiles and laughter when it's time to greet it,
 And say: '*Creator, save me from its badness*
And don't prevent me gaining from its goodness!
Enable me to give what I see praise
Yet not feel sorry when each one decays!'
 Watch over that sour-faced thought and instead
 View it as sugar sweet inside your head!
 Although the cloud seems sour-faced, it brings you
 Rose gardens and ends barrenness here too.
 Consider the sad thought a cloud—refrain 3700
 From looking sourly at what's sour again!
 The pearl might be held in its hand today—
 Strive so it is content on going away!

Even if there's no pearl and it's not wealthy
 You will acquire a habit that is healthy,
 And will a later time gain benefit,
 Some day when you are least expecting it.
 The thought that blocks your happiness is planned:
 It's from the Maker's wisdom and command.
 Young man, don't call it wretched, for it may
 Yet be a star that brings good luck your way!
 Deem it the root, not a mere branch, so you
 May always reach your goal in what you do:
 If you deem it a branch and as malignant
 Your eyes will hold out for the root, expectant:
 Waiting expectantly's a waste of breath—
 Living like that keeps you always in death.
 Deem it the root and hold it close, to be
 Delivered from death by expectancy.

3705

The Sultan Mahmud praises Ayaz.

'Ayaz, so humble, with sincerity—
 Yours is more than the mountain and the sea.
 When lust should come to you, you still don't stumble:
 Your mountain-strong intelligence won't crumble.
 Neither in spite and anger's time do you
 Lose some forbearance as most others do.'
 Penis and beard don't give one manliness,
 Or else the crown's for donkeys' penises!
 Based on the way God speaks in the Qur'an
 How can a body signify a 'man'?
 What value have the lowest bestial souls?
 Take a look when you pass the butchers' stalls:
 So many heads are placed on tripe like that,
 All worth less than a tail with all its fat.
 Only whoremongers, due to stiff erections,
 Let reason be a mouse and lusts all lions.

3710

3715

*A father advises his daughter to prevent her husband
from getting her pregnant.*

A noble man once had a daughter who
Was radiant-faced and silver-breasted too.
He found a husband once she was mature
But that man wasn't good enough for sure.
If you don't cut it when it's ripe you'll see 3720
Your melon will be far too watery:
Out of necessity he gave his daughter,
For fear of sinful acts, to one below her:
'Guard yourself from your husband!' he had said,
'So you do not get pregnant, though you've wed
The beggar as a sad necessity—
One can't count on a stranger's loyalty.
Abandoning all, he might leave suddenly
And his child stay as an iniquity.'
The daughter said, 'Father, I will obey. 3725
I value all the good advice you say.'
Every couple of days the father would
Tell her to take precautions that she should.
The daughter still got pregnant suddenly—
They were both young, so unsurprisingly—
She hid it and her father wasn't told
Until the baby had reached six months old.
Once it became quite obvious, her father
Asked, 'What is this? I warned you not to falter.
All my advice was wasted breath since it 3730
Has not been beneficial one small bit.'
'How could I guard myself,' she then cried out,
'Couples are fire and cotton, there's no doubt.
From flames can cotton ever take precaution?
Or have you seen a fire behave with caution?'
'I warned you not to go near him, not to
Let that man's semen enter inside you,
That when he climaxes, without delay
You really need to pull yourself away.'
'How could I guess when he'd ejaculate? 3735
That is too hard for one to estimate.'

He said, 'The moment his eyes should dilate
 That means he's going to ejaculate.'
 She said, 'By the time his dilated, mine
 Turned blind, O father—I could see no sign!
 Not every intellect stays steadfast, friends,
 When anger, lust, or violence descends.

*Description of the faintheartedness and weakness of a Sufi brought up in comfort, who has never struggled and has never experienced the pain and burning of love, having become deluded by the prostrating and hand-kissing of the common folk and their looking at him with veneration and pointing at him to say, 'This is the Sufi.' He has become deluded and sick through imaginings like that teacher whom the children told that he was ill. * Falsely imagining 'I am a warrior and a hero', he has gone on raids with soldiers, and said, 'I'll show my outward skills too. I am unrivalled in the Greater Jihad, so how can the Lesser Jihad be difficult for me?'* * *He has seen the false image of a lion and has done feats of bravery and become intoxicated with that bravery, heading to the jungle to find a lion. The lion mystically says, 'Now you will find out, and again you will find out.'* *

A Sufi joined an army readily.

The battle's clamour rose up suddenly.

With wounded men and baggage he stayed back

3740

While horsemen rode ahead for the attack:

The heavy, earthbound ones stayed, while instead

The *foremost of the foremost** rode ahead.

After victorious combat they returned

With spoils of war and profits they had earned.

They gave the Sufi something: 'Here's your pay!'

Refusing it, he just threw it away.

They asked him, 'Why so angry and uptight?'

He said, 'I was denied the chance to fight.'

He wasn't pleased with their kind gesture, for

3745

He hadn't drawn a dagger in the war.

They then told him, 'Here is a prisoner

Whom we've brought back—kill him if you prefer!

Chop off his head and be a warrior too!'

The Sufi felt encouraged; his joy grew.
Water's best for ablution, but you can
Use sand instead if you have none, good man.*
The Sufi led the tied-up prisoner
Past all the tents, to play the warrior.
He stayed then with the captive for so long 3750
The others said, 'He's been some time. What's wrong?
A tied-up infidel is ready now
To be killed, so why take time anyhow?'
One of them went to find out: there he found
The prisoner over him while on the ground
Like a male lion on a lioness:
The captive on the Sufi's back no less!
With hands tied he was biting furiously
The Sufi warrior's throat, and he could see
While he was biting in ways that were vicious 3755
The Sufi sprawled beneath was now unconscious.
The infidel, with hands bound, like a cat
Had cut his throat without a knife like that:
With his own teeth he had half-killed the Sufi
Whose bleeding throat had made his beard all bloody.
At the hands of your hands-bound carnal soul
You play the base and witless Sufi's role.
You whose path can't ascend a little hill,
A million mountains lie before you still.
You're scared stiff of this little ridge's slope, 3760
So, at the mountain's peak, how will you cope?

The warrior killed the infidel then quickly
With a sword, zealously and with no pity.
They poured rose water on the Sufi's head
To wake him up as he lay there half-dead.
He saw the group once he woke up and they
Asked him, 'What happened to you there today?
What was the problem, our dear friend? Please share
How you became unconsciousness over there?
Did you become like that, sprawled on the ground 3765
Due to a half-killed captive with hands bound?'

'When I stretched to chop off that captive's head
 He looked at me in an odd way,' he said.
 'He opened his eyes till they were enormous,
 Then rolled them scarily—I fell unconscious.
 That rolling of his eyes seemed like an army;
 Words can't describe how much this would alarm me—
 To sum it up, the way they rolled around
 Made me lose all my wits and hit the ground.'

The warriors advised him, 'With such little courage and heart that you faint at the rolling of the eyes by an infidel captive whose hands are bound, such that the dagger falls from your hand, be wary and stay in the khaniqah's kitchen rather than go to the battle, so you will avoid being embarrassed!'

The group said, 'Don't approach the battle now 3770
 With a weak stomach like yours anyhow!
 Since you got so drunk through that captive's eyes
 Your ship was wrecked, it would be no surprise
 If you then fail with rampant lions instead
 Whose swords treat like a ball the foe's chopped head.
 How can you swim in blood when you still lack
 A man's experience of how to attack?
 The sound of chopping necks drowns out the sound
 Of washers slamming heavy clothes around.
 The headless bodies jerk still in their struggles 3775
 While chopped heads float on blood just like big bubbles.
 Trampled by legs of horses one can see
 Hundreds of fighters die immediately.
 Someone who flees a mouse can't draw a sword
 In battle lines against a murderous horde.
 It's war, not supping broth, so please don't think
 You need just roll your sleeves to have a drink.
 Don't sup soup—find a sword to use today!
 We need an iron Hamza in this fray.*
 It's not for the fainthearted one to kill— 3780
 A fake man flees unreal illusions still.
 The man's work's not for women, so beware—
 Women belong at home—you'd best stay there!'

Story about Eyazi, who took part in seventy holy wars bare-chested in the hope of becoming martyred. Once he lost hope in that happening, he turned from the Lesser Jihad to the Greater Jihad, choosing seclusion. Suddenly he heard the sound of holy warriors and his self inside him pulled its chain to go and fight, but he grew suspicious of his self and its desiring this.*

‘I came to battle naked,’ said Eyazi,
‘Ninety times to get wounded very quickly.
I went towards the arrows in the air
So one would pierce me, and I didn’t care.
None but the fortunate martyr will get struck
By arrows in a vital part. Such luck!
No body part’s stayed woundless, but I live 3785
Though arrows made them much more like a sieve.
The arrows didn’t strike a vital part
Due to luck, not through shrewdness on my part:
Since being martyred wasn’t meant to be
I started a retreat immediately—
The Greater Jihad’s what I undertook:
My body thinned due to its hardships—look!
I’d hear the drums of warriors start their banging
Each time the warriors’ army would start marching.
My self would shout from deep within—I’d hear 3790
It in the early morning with my ear:
“It’s time for holy wars, so stand upright
And busy yourself now in the great fight!”
“O wretched, faithless self,” I answered back,
“How far you are from yearning to attack!
Speak truthfully that it’s a trick today!
I know the carnal soul does not obey.
If you don’t tell the truth then I will hit you
And force on you more discipline and tests too.”
The self cried out at this immediately 3795
Without a mouth, but still deceitfully:
“You kill me here each day, as you know well,
Torturing me like I’m an infidel.
No one knows my condition under you:
You kill me with no sleep and no food too.

One blow in war enables me to flee
 Your body and show off my bravery.”
 “O wretched soul, you hypocrite!” I said,
 “You lived as one and as one you’ll be dead:
 A show-off in both worlds, so ostentatious; 3800
 In both worlds you were also clearly pointless.
 I vowed not to leave my retreat while I
 Still have a living body, till I die,
 Because what it does while in this seclusion
 Is not for any person’s eye’s attention:
 In this retreat, its movement and its stillness
 Are only for God’s sake—He’s the sole witness.’

This is the Greater Jihad, that the lesser,*
 Both for a Rostam or Ali-like warrior,
 Not for the one whose wits will flee his body 3805
 When a mere mouse’s tail moves very slowly—
 That one must stay, like women, far from here,
 The battlefield with weapons like the spear.
 Both are called ‘Sufi’, though it’s understood:
 One’s killed by needles, one eats swords as food.
 The former’s just the surface of a Sufi
 And gives a bad name to those who are truly.
 Possessively, God etched their forms this way
 Upon the human body’s house of clay,
 So such forms would move magically about, 3810
 But Moses’s rod still stay veiled throughout—
 The rod’s truth eats the former easily,
 Though Pharaoh’s eyes have too much dust to see.*

Another Sufi twenty times would go
 To battles to receive blow after blow,
 Fighting with Muslims infidels, but he
 Would not retreat with them so readily—
 He bandaged his own wound and was soon back
 Fighting the foes with a renewed attack,
 So that one cheap blow wouldn’t kill his body, 3815

But in the battle he'd be struck by forty:
 For him to die with one blow would be awful,
 That his soul should leave easily one so truthful.

Story about that holy warrior who every day would take out a dirham coin from a purse of silver and throw it separately into a ditch in order to battle his carnal soul's greed and desire. His carnal soul tempted him by saying, 'Since you are throwing them into the ditch, throw them all at once so that I can be relieved, for despair is one of two reliefs.' He said, 'I won't give you this relief either.'

A man had forty dirhams in possession
 Each night he'd throw one of them in the ocean,
 So it would give his carnal soul more stress,
 The agony drawn out by this process.
 He would advance with Muslims to attack,
 But at retreat's hour he would not rush back—
 He'd get another wound and wrap that too; 3820
 Arrows and spears by him were split in two.
 Once all strength left him he'd fall finally
 On *Truth's Seat** due to his sincerity.
 Sincerity's to give up life, so heed:
 'Excel the others!' Read: 'Those true indeed.'*
 All of this death is not just outwardly—
 Body's a tail for spirit if you see:
 Blood has been spilled by many a raw one
 Just outwardly while his soul has lived on—
 Its tool broke, but the brigand was still living; 3825
 The soul lives on although its steed is bleeding.
 The horse was killed before they made the journey
 And he became thus raw, disturbed, and ugly.
 If martyrs are made every time men bleed
 Dead infidels would match Abu Sa'eed.*
 So many trusted martyred souls are moving
 Around the world the same way as the living.
 The brigand's soul died, but his sword will stay
 Held in another killer's hands today:
 The sword's the same although the man is new, 3830
 But its appearance still perplexes you.

When the soul is transformed the body's sword
 Stays under the control of the Kind Lord.
 A real man is the one who feeds on suffering;
 Others are empty like the dust, worth nothing.

*An informer describes a girl and shows a portrait of her on paper to
 the Caliph of Egypt, who falls in love with her and sends a
 commander with a huge army to Mosul where they wreak much
 destruction and slaughter many for the sake of his aim.*

Egypt's Caliph was told by an informer:
 'Mosul's king married a young houri stunner:
 He has a gorgeous maid now by his side
 Who can't be matched though one search far and wide.
 Beyond all words, her beauty has no limit— 3835
 Here is some paper with her portrait on it.'
 That Kaiqobad-like monarch* saw the portrait,
 Grew mesmerized and even dropped his goblet.
 He sent to Mosul a fine leader then
 With a huge army of so many men:
 'If he won't give up that fair one to you
 Destroy his palace and his whole court too!
 If he complies, leave him alone and take her,
 So I can finally lie down and embrace her!' 3840
 So off to Mosul went the famed commander
 With numerous men and many a drum and banner.
 The thousands were like locusts swarming wheat,
 Heading to give that city's men defeat.
 He used a mangonel on every side
 As big as Mount Qaf for the war he plied.
 Arrows and rocks would wound so many fighting
 And swords flashed through the dust like bolts of lightning.
 They kept on spilling blood for a whole week.
 Stone towers, like soft wax, became so weak.
 Mosul's king saw the war's atrocity 3845
 Then sent an envoy there immediately
 To ask, 'Why spill believers' blood so badly?
 There's so much killing—this war's toll's huge sadly.
 If you desire possession of this city

It can be yours without the bloodshed's cruelty.
 I'll simply leave and you can take possession
 And never be avenged for your oppression.
 And if your wish is riches, jewels, and gold
 That's easier than the city to be sold.'

*The ruler of Mosul sacrifices that maid to the Caliph so that the
 bloodshed of Muslims would not continue.*

Their envoy met the army's great commander 3850
 And then received the portrait from the latter:
 'Look at this paper! We want her,' he said,
 'Give her or I'll take over now as head!
 The envoy went back to his king—his order:
 'Don't overrate form. Take her to the border!
 In true faith's time I'm no idolater—
 She suits much more that idol-worshipper.'
 The envoy took her to him hurriedly
 And he then fell in love immediately.
 Love is a sea, the heavens foam on it— 3855
 Zolaikha's love for Joseph showed us it:
 Love's passion makes the heavens turn above;
 The heavens would be lifeless without love:
 How should inert things die in plants, good men?
 And plants self-sacrifice for spirit? Then
 How should the spirit for that Breath which made
 Mary get pregnant with no human aid?*

Each wouldn't move like ice—how could they fly
 Like locusts when they need what's not nearby?
 Atoms are lovers of perfection and 3860
 They all rush up as saplings rise from land—
 Their rush says '*Glory to God!*' and their role's
 To cleanse the bodies for the sake of souls.

The army chief deemed a mere pit the road:
 He thought that barren soil was good and sowed.
 The dreamer saw an image, copulated
 With her in sleep and then ejaculated—

But when he woke up he became aware
 The plaything from dreams was no longer there:
 'I came for nothing—O alas!' he said, 3865
 'A shame I fell for that flirtatious maid.'
 This army chief was just the body's champion,
 Not manly, sowing seeds in land so barren.
 His love's steed tore its bridle and let fly:
 He yelled, 'I'm not concerned that I might die!
Why should I care about the Caliph now?
Love makes my life and death the same somehow.'
 Don't sow with heat and ardour in this manner—
 Instead seek the advice of a true master!
 What's reason and advice when love's flood's growth 3870
 Extends its talons to destroy them both?
 'In front a barrier, and one more behind' *—
 Besotted minds don't see front or behind.
 The torrent's come to kill him with its spell
 And thus a fox can throw lions down a well.*
 Inside it a false image tricks the eye,
 So it brings down a lion of massive size.
 Don't let men near the women out of caution,
 For man and woman are like sparks and cotton.
 Such fire's quenched by God's water, nothing less: 3875
 Joseph stayed chaste thus, facing wickedness,
 Stepping back like a lion from Zolaikha
 Despite her cypress-like, attractive figure.

They went from Mosul and camped at a spot
 Near woods and meadows—he was feeling hot
 From love's fire that was blazing now so high
 He could no longer tell earth from the sky.
 Inside his tent he reached out for that sweet one—
 Where was fear of the Caliph or his reason?
 When lust should beat drums in the valley, then 3880
 Your reason's like a flimsy radish, men.
 A hundred Caliphs seemed less than a fly
 Right at that moment to his flame-filled eye.
 Once he had pulled his trousers off and lay

Between this woman's legs, then straight away
His penis started pressing her arse firmly,
But then commotion rose among the army—
He jumped up naked and went to the horde
Holding in his hand a fierce, fiery sword.
He saw a wild black lion now attack 3885
The army's centre without holding back.
Like demons all the horses now grew manic,
Stables and tents in chaos due to panic.
That lion jumped from distance frighteningly
High in the air like billows of the sea.
The army chief was fearless now and valiant,
Nearing the lion, like a drunk, so violent:
With his big sword he calmly sliced its head
And rushed back to the fair maid in his bed.
Once he appeared again to her, his member 3890
Was still erect the way she could remember:
He'd fought a lion yet this man could keep
His penis still erect and not asleep.
That lovely, fair-faced idol instantly
Was mesmerized by his virility.
She lustfully had sex with him and they
Were two souls joined as one in a strong way.
And through the union of these souls together
From the Unseen there soon would come another:
Through being born it comes forth without question 3895
As long as nothing waylays its conception.
Whenever two should join so they can mate
A third is born, whether it's love or hate.
Such forms are born, though in the Unseen realm—
When you go there you will see all of them.
They're your relationships' own progeny—
Don't celebrate each partner hastily!
Be wary, wait until the time it's due—
Know that '*the offspring shall all join*'* is true,
For they are born from acts and causes, so 3900
Each has its form and speech, which you should know.
Their cries arrive from lovely reaches: 'You
Who did forget us—come without ado!

Men's and women's souls are kept waiting—why?
 Walk much more quickly to arrive on high!
 On that false dawn the captain went astray,
 Falling in milk like flies who've lost their way.

*The army chief regrets the sin he committed and makes the maid
 swear not to tell the Caliph what happened.*

For a few days the chief stayed in this way,
 But then regretted their big sin that day.
 He made her swear, 'O fair face like the sun, 3905
 Don't give the Caliph hints of what we've done!'
 The Caliph got drunk when he saw this woman:
 A bowl fell off his roof all of a sudden.
 She was to him more pretty than he'd heard:
 Seeing is more than hearing someone's word.
 Description forms a picture in the mind;
 Appearance is for eyes not ears, you'll find.
 A man asked a great speaker, 'Make it clearer
 What truth and falsehood are, respected speaker!'
 He grabbed his ear: 'This is false actually. 3910
 The eye is truth and it gains certainty.
 The former's false compared next to the latter;
 Most sayings are this way, friend, for that matter.'
 A bat might screen itself from that bright sun,
 But not from the idea of the sun,
 And that idea alone will scare it too,
 Driving it to the darkness out of view:
 The thought of light alone gives it such fright
 So it prefers the darkness of the night.
 It's due to the idea of your foe 3915
 That you stick close to the good friends you know.
 Moses, your revelation shone down there
 On Sinai, but too much for it to bear.*
 Don't be deluded and imagine you
 Can through the image reach the real thing too.
 Men don't fear warfare's image on its own:
 'Before war there's no bravery', it's known.
 Based on an image of what an attack is

The weak try, like Rostam, to make advances.
Rostam's mere portrait on a bathhouse wall 3920
Is their view of a comrade in a brawl.
When hearsay's seen for real what will they do?
An actual Rostam would feel bound then too.
Strive so it moves from ear to eye for you
So what was false before becomes now true.
Your ears will join your eyes and they will be
Each turned into a jewel incredibly.
Then your whole body will become a mirror,
All eye and that jewel in your breast. Thereafter
Your ear will raise imaginings and they 3925
Will serve as go-betweens on union's way.
Strive to make these imaginings grow soon
So go-betweens can be guides for Majnun.

The foolish Caliph was for a while smitten
And grew infatuated with that woman.
Nowhere from East to West do empires last—
They're like a lightning flash which soon has passed.
You whose heart sleeps—the kingdom that won't last
Is merely like a dream: it soon has passed.
What do you want with all its pomp and glory? 3930
It grabs your throat like executioners. Hurry,
Even in this world there is a safe spot—
Don't heed the hypocrites who claim there's not!

*The proof of the deniers of the next world and an explanation
of its weakness, since their arguments amount to: 'We do not see
any other world.'*

The proof of the deniers: 'If there really
Were something else, we would have seen already.'
If children can't see reason totally
Should it be something rational men should flee?
If rational men can't see some sides of love
Still there's no waning in love's moon above.
Joseph's brothers did not see handsomeness 3935

In him, but Jacob's eyes saw nothing less.*
 The rod was wood in Moses's own eyes—
 The Unseen eye saw a wild snake surprise.*
 Outward and inward eyes engaged in battle;
 The heart's eye won and showed proof that could settle.
 Moses's hand was just that in his sight,
 To the Unseen's eye though it was pure light.*
 This discourse cannot here reach termination.
 To one deprived, it's mere imagination:
 Gullet and balls are his realities, 3940
 So don't share the Beloved's mysteries!
 We see as trivial throats and testicles
 So the soul shows us gorgeous spectacles.
 To testicles and gullet, lovers say:
 'To you your faith, to me mine'* come what may.
 Ahmad,* don't argue with denial—abort it!
 Talking with infidels is just not worth it.

The Caliph comes to that pretty maid's side in order to have sex.

The Caliph wanted to have sex and so
 He went towards the maid to let her know.
 Remembering her gave him a stiff erection; 3945
 He longed to hump that cause of love's expansion.
 Once he lay down between her legs, by fate
 His pleasure's opening quickly slammed its gate:
 A mouse's scratching reached his ears and then
 His penis grew limp and lust fled again.
 He thought a snake had made the noise, one that
 Was moving rapidly beneath a mat.

The maid starts to laugh at the weakness of the Caliph's lust and the strength of the Captain's lust, and the Caliph understands her laughter.

The woman laughed when it turned limp and she
 In utter shock laughed uncontrollably.
 She then recalled the Captain's manliness: 3950
 He'd killed a lion, stayed firm nonetheless!

The woman's laughter went on endlessly;
She couldn't close her lips incredibly:
She laughed so hard as if she'd got high on it;
Her laughter blocked all thought of loss or profit.
Any new thought made her laugh even more
As when a floodgate opens up the door.
Crying, laughter, sadness, and joy—of course
Each of them has an independent source:
Each is a treasury—keys are in the hand 3955
Of that One Opener, brother—understand!
That laughter wouldn't stop as she wished badly.
The Caliph therefore grew more harsh and angry.
He drew his sword from its sheath then, demanding:
Tell me your laughter's secret ! Why this laughing?
The laughter's made my heart suspicious—tell me
The truth! You can't by other means placate me,
If you try to deceive me with a lie
Or bring a cheap excuse—I'll know, for I
Have deep inside my heart a special light, 3960
So you must tell me what is true tonight!
There is a bright moon in each king's heart, though
Forgetting's cloud may cover it below:
There is a lamp inside the heart, O lover,
Though lust and rage can spoil it like a cover.
I have clairvoyance in my heart now, so
If you don't tell the truth I seek to know
I'll chop your neck off with this sword—say it!
Making excuses has no benefit.
If you tell me the truth, I'll set you free— 3965
I swear to God you will live happily.'
Seven Qur'ans he then brought there together
And swore to God he wouldn't break this ever.

*The maid discloses the secret to the Caliph in fear of the sword's
blow and due to being bound to the Caliph who said: 'Tell me the
truth about the cause of this laughter or I will kill you!'*

Since she had no choice she disclosed then all:
The manliness of that Rostam of Zal.

She shared facts with the Caliph one by one:
 The bride chamber where it had all begun,
 The lion's killing and his coming back
 With penis hard still after his attack
 Like rhino horns, and then the shameful weakness
 Of a mouse causing his soft, drooping penis. 3970

God reveals secrets, making them all known—
 Don't sow bad seeds for they'll be seen once grown:
 Water, clouds, fire, and the hot sun will raise
 The secrets from the soil through nature's ways.
 The new spring comes, succeeding the fall too—
 It's proof that Resurrection's claim is true.
 All of the secrets will in spring be shown;
 Whatever soil's consumed will then be known:
 It comes out from its mouth and lips to all, 3975
 So that its thoughts and path are visible.
 Every tree's roots and food, which are concealed,
 Eventually on the treetop are revealed.
 Each grief that brings pain to your heart reached there
 Through wine you drank, but you are unaware
 From which wine that pain has arrived in you
 Out of all of the wines you've drunk, aren't you?
 The hangover's the blossom of a seed—
 One who knows is a visionary indeed.
 Blossom and branch don't look like seeds, but then 3980
 Sperm doesn't look like bodies of grown men:
 Material doesn't look like product now—
 How can the seeds resemble trees somehow?
 Man's sperm is made by bread, and yet they differ:
 Men come from sperm, although they aren't similar.
 Jinn are from fire, but don't resemble that;*
 Clouds are from vapour, but don't look like that.
 Though Gabriel's breath made Jesus, one can't claim
 That in their form the two are just the same.
 Man's made of clay, but doesn't look that way; 3985
 Grapes don't resemble their own vines, do they?
 How can theft look like gallows to one's eyes,

Obedience like eternal paradise?
Sources aren't like their products—that is why
Pain's source can be hard to identify.
There always is a cause for punishment,
For how could God hurt one who's innocent.
The source and what leads to it actually
Caused it, though there's no similarity.
Your pain comes from a lapse—heed this with trust! 3990
And its affliction is due to your lust.
Though you can't work out which sin, hurriedly
Seek God's forgiveness with humility.
Prostrate, repeating: 'God, my suffering is
Not more than what I'm due for trespasses.
Free from injustice, You're magnificent—
How could you hurt a soul that's innocent?
Though I don't know with accuracy which sin,
Sin must have been what made this pain begin.
Since you concealed the cause from my reflection 3995
This means you'll save my sin from eyes' detection.
Though I deserve to have my sins now shown,
Punishing me would make them too well known.'

When the monarch learns of the treachery he resolves to conceal it and forgive her, then give her to his captain. He knows that this trouble is what he deserves and is due to his intention and unjust treatment of the ruler of Mosul, for 'Whoever does evil, it falls back on him', and 'Your Lord is watching.'* The monarch fears that if he should seek revenge instead, that vengeance would fall back on his own head the same way that the injustice and lust already had.*

The monarch came to his wits, begged forgiveness,
Recalling his past sins and obstinateness:
'What I have done to others has now earned
My soul a punishment. That's what I've learned.
I sought another's spouse out of ambition
And fell inside a pit from retribution:
I'd knocked on someone else's door, so he 4000
Knocked back on my door so deservedly.

Seeking to have sex with another's wife
 Is actually pimping out your own dear wife:
 Suffering the same is what that earns, you see—
 A bad deed earns the same back equally.
 You've instigated and drawn also to
 Yourself the same: you are a cuckold too!

The king thought, 'I, by force, took that king's maid
 Then she was seized from me too, so I've paid.
 My treachery made my trusted friend and servant 4005
 Treacherous also—my own act was no different.
 It's no occasion for revenge from me—
 I did this to myself: naivety!
 If I avenge the maid and my commander
 This new sin will come back to haunt me after,
 Just as what happened was for my own crime—
 I've tried her and won't do it one more time.
 Mosul's king's grief has broken my neck—how
 Should I attack this other person now?
 God's let us know the recompense that's due: 4010
*"If you repeat, we will repeat it too."**
 Since adding any more is pointless now
 Patience and mercy are appropriate now.
"Lord, we've transgressed!":* we lapsed and it's on us.
 Your mercy's huge—have mercy now on us!
 I have forgiven, so please pardon me
 The new sin and the errors previously!
 He told her, 'Slave girl, don't you give away
 To others what I have just heard you say!
 I'll pair you with that champion once again— 4015
 By God don't tell this tale to other men,
 So he won't be far too ashamed to face me.
 He did one bad thing; his good deeds are many.
 I've tested him before so often too:
 I've put in his care those more fair than you
 And found that I could trust him totally.
 For bad things I've done, this was God's decree.'

He summoned the commander to his side
And cooled the vengeful anger deep inside,
Then gave him an excuse convincingly: 4020
‘I’ve turned off this new slave-girl suddenly.
The mother of my child now boils with anger
Stemming from jealousy that I acquired her—
I owe her: she deserves much more from me
Than to be treated now so terribly.
She’s feeling jealous and this makes her suffer;
The slave-girl’s presence makes her feel so bitter.
I want to give the slave-girl to another
And you, my friend, more than the rest deserve her.
You risked your life to bring her here, so to 4025
Choose someone else would be unfair to you.’
He later married her to his commander,
Crushing in this way both his lust and anger.

Explaining that ‘we allotted’ means that He gives one the lust
and strength of donkeys and another the wisdom and
strength of Prophets and angels.*

*Turning away from lust shows excellence:
Doing this showed the Prophets’ eminence.
The fruit of seeds that were lust-free when sown
Only at Resurrection will be known.*

That king lacked donkeys’ kind of machoness,
But not the Prophets’ kind of manliness.
It’s manly and resembling a true Prophet
To quit your lust and rage and never covet.
The donkeys’ manliness can be left out.
God called him ‘Great Commander Sir’ without.
To have God look at me though I be dead 4030
Beats being alive but far from Him instead.
Tell manliness’s kernel from its shell;
Instead of paradise lust leads to hell.
The Prophet said, ‘Hardship’s surrounding heaven
While hell’s surrounded by your lust and passion.’

O Ayaz, you fierce lion and demon-slayer,
 True wisdom's manliness in you is greater.
 Many great men could not see what for you,
 The real man, was so easily in view.
 You felt the pleasure of obeying me
 And gave your life for its sake loyally.
 Listen to this next tale on the delight
 When you obey me, seen through mystic light!

4035

The king at a meeting in his court puts a pearl in the hand of the vizier, asking: 'How much is it worth?' The vizier says a very high price and the king tells him, 'Crush it!' The vizier says, 'How could I break it?' and so forth.

One day the king rushed to his court and found
 All of his closest courtiers gathered round.
 He took a radiant pearl out and then quickly
 Placed it on the vizier's hand and asked, 'Tell me
 What is this pearl's worth, if the truth be told?'
 'More than a hundred donkey loads of gold.'
 He ordered, 'Crush it!' 'How can I when I
 Want all your treasures' net worth to stay high?
 How could I let a pearl that's priceless be
 Wasted like that by doing your decree?'
 The king said, 'Bravo! Here's a robe of honour',
 And took the pearl back to give to another.
 The generous king gave that vizier all clothing
 And robes that he had previously been using.
 He then engaged them all in conversations
 About old puzzles and new situations,
 Placed that pearl in the chamberlain's hand, then
 'What is this fine pearl worth?' he asked again.
 'It is worth half a kingdom in my view.
 May God protect it well from damage too!'
 The king said, 'Crush it!' 'King, with your sword blazing,
 To crush this radiant pearl would be heartbreaking.
 Not just its value, look at it shine bright—
 It's brighter than the sunniest day's light.
 How should my hand break that? How should I be

4040

4045

An enemy of the king's treasury?
The king gave him a robe too, raised his pay, 4050
Then praised his wisdom with the things he'd say.
The king who did this testing at his palace
Next gave it to the Minister of Justice.
He asked the same thing he had done before
And he bestowed a sought out robe once more.
It seemed the king was raising each one's pay,
But really he was leading off the way.
Fifty-odd ministers spoke the same way
As the vizier from earlier in the day.
Though the world's based on copying, all the same, 4055
Once tested, imitation's put to shame.

The pearl passing from hand to hand finally comes to Ayaz's hand, showing his wisdom and refusal to imitate them or become beguiled by the king's giving them riches and robes of honour, increasing their salaries and praising their intellects. One should not consider the imitator a Muslim, as it is very rare for the imitator to hold strongly to his conviction and come through the trials soundly, for he does not have the firm resolve of mystics, except those whom God keeps pure. This is because The Truth is One and Its opposite may look similar, but is really very misleading. Since the imitator does not recognize the opposite, he cannot really have come to know God. However, despite his not knowing Him, God looks after the likes of him with His grace, so that ignorance of his does not harm him.

The king then turned to Ayaz, 'Now I ask you
To tell me what's this radiant pearl's true value?'
Ayaz then answered, 'More than I can say.'
The king said, 'Crush it to bits straight away!'
He crushed it with some rocks that he'd brought there
As that seemed the best course for one aware.
Because of his auspicious star's concurrence
Rare wisdom helped him in this strange occurrence,
Or maybe that pure one'd dreamt of this case 4060
And therefore brought two big rocks to this place,

Like Joseph at the bottom of the well,
 To whom God showed the outcome none could tell.*

Success and failure are seen equally
 By those whom God has told of victory.
 For one who's joined to God forever, why
 Should combat and defeat still terrify?
 Losing a knight and bishop is so trivial
 When one knows that check-mate will be successful:
 If someone takes your knight, that is no shame 4065
 Since it is not required to win the game.
 A man can't love a horse like his own kin,
 His love for it is to advance and win.
 Don't suffer pain just for a mere form's sake!
 Seize the deep meaning free from form's vile ache!
 Ascetics worry for their final fate
 When Judgement Day arrives and it's too late.
 Mystics have grown wise over their beginnings
 And so they don't feel stress about their endings.
 That fear and hope was felt by mystics too, 4070
 But knowledge of the past consumed those two:
 Knowing that he has sowed beans previously,
 The mystic knows what will grow finally.
 A mystic, he's fled fear and hope's emotion—
 God's sword has sliced in two all the commotion.
 He did have fear and hope from God before—
 Fear faded, hope came clearly to the fore.

Once Ayaz crushed that pearl as ordered to
 The ministers raised a hullabalo
 'What utter lack of feeling! We can tell 4075
 Whoever crushed it is an infidel.'
 That whole group through sheer ignorance had broken
 The pearl of the command the king had spoken:
 That costly pearl, the fruit of love's affection—
 Why was that veiled from those men's minds' perception?

*How the ministers reproached Ayaz, saying: 'Why did he crush it?'
and Ayaz's answer to them.*

Ayaz said, 'Noble men, is the king's order
More precious or the pearl you worry over?
The ruler's order or that pearl—which one
Is better in your view? Speak everyone!
Drawn to the pearl and not the king today, 4080
Your prayer niche faces ghouls, not the true way.
I won't turn back from our king my own face
Towards a stone like polytheists—disgrace!
Any soul choosing coloured stones before
A king lacks jewels in its inner store.
Turn away from the rosy plaything, brother!
Make reason stunned in Him who gives all colour!
Come to the stream, slam your jug on a stone!
Ditch scents and colours for That One alone!
If on faith's path you aren't a waylayer too 4085
Don't worship them the way that women do!

The nobles cast their heads down all at once,
Seeking forgiveness for their negligence.
From each one's heart there rose a massive sigh
Like smoke that's rising upwards to the sky.
The king then told his whipper: 'They are base
So take them far from this distinguished place!
How can base ones deserve it? Their mistake
Was shunning my command for a stone's sake.
By this corrupt sort my wish was ignored 4090
Due to a coloured stone, which they adored.'

*The king intends to kill the ministers and Ayaz intercedes for them
before the royal throne, saying: 'To forgive is better.'*

That loving Ayaz then all of a sudden
Sprang forwards to the throne of that great sultan,
Prostrated, cleared his throat, then begged and praised:
'O king, by whom the heavens are amazed,

The heavens gain from you auspiciousness.
 You're chivalry of all the chivalrous:
 The generous acts that all the rest have done
 Are all effaced before you, generous one.
 O fine one, whom the red rose saw before 4095
 And then, in shame, tore off the shirt it wore.
 Forgiveness is content with your own pardon
 And, through your pardon, fox defeats the lion.
 What can support a person who is heedless
 Of your command apart from your forgiveness?
 Their disrespect and heedlessness are due
 To your pardon—forgiving's mine is you.
 Negligence comes from brazenness, while reverence
 Is all that can cure sick eyes in this instance.
 The heedlessness and disrespect they've learned 4100
 In flames of reverence will get quickly burned.'

Awe of God gives one wisdom's wakefulness
 And rids the heart of lax forgetfulness.
 No one will sleep while they're under attack
 In case their cloak is swiped behind their back—
 When fear of losing cloaks does this, how then
 Can one sleep when one's throat's at risk again?
 'Don't punish us if we forget!' * is telling:
 It shows that negligence is somehow sinning.
 It means he wasn't totally respectful 4105
 Or else he'd not have lost by being neglectful.
 Though negligence was fully necessary
 And not avoidable, his choice was free,
 For he was lax in acts of reverence
 And from this came wrongdoing, negligence.
 He's like a drunk who sins then makes the claim:
 'I'd lost my wits so I'm excused from blame',
 But he is told, 'You caused it; it's on you:
 You lost your will power with the things you'd do.
 Your wits did not leave on their own, nor too 4110
 Your will power—they were ordered both by you.'
 If drunkenness came outside your control

It would be from the Saqi of the soul—
 He would have backed you and he would have said:
 ‘I am the slave of God’s true drunk’ instead.
 All of forgiveness one finds in this sphere
 Is one mote of Yours, from which all appear.
 They’re singing praise of Your forgiveness: ‘*People,
 Beware that This One truly has no equal.*’
 Grant them their lives! Don’t banish them, for they 4115
 Desire fulfiller, want you—let them stay!
 Be merciful on those who’ve seen your face—
 How can they bear an exile from your place?
 You talk of separation—you can do
 What you wish, but not that I beg of you!
 A million bitter, six-fold deaths hurt less
 Than exile from Your face in terms of stress.
 Keep exile’s bitterness from men and women!
 Sinners appeal to You for help, so listen!
 Death’s sweet in hope of union with You, yes, 4120
 While worse than fire is exile’s bitterness.
 Among the flames the infidel will say:
 ‘What pain would I have if He’d looked my way?’
 Because that glance can make all pains taste sweet,
 The blood-price for magicians’ hands and feet:

*Exegesis of the words of Pharaoh’s magicians when they were
 punished: ‘There’s no harm for us. We are heading to our Lord.’**

The heavens heard, ‘*There’s no harm*’* and at that
 They turned into a ball just for that bat.
 ‘God’s grace prevails above the wrath of others.
 So Pharaoh’s punishment can’t harm us sorcerers:
 If you should learn our secret, O deceiver, 4125
 You’d free us from the pain, blindhearted leader.
 Beware, come to this side and hear one say:
 “*Would that my people knew!*”* for once today!
 God’s bounty’s given us a leadership
 Different to your own transient pharaohship.
 Look up at the grand, living realm a while,
 You who are stunned by Egypt and the Nile!

Abandon now this dirty cloak and you
 Can drown that Nile in the pure soul's Nile too!
 Beware, O Pharaoh, and let go of Egypt: 4130
 Scores of Egypts are in the spirit's Egypt.
 You say, "*I am lord*"* to your subjects though
 What this word means is something you don't know.
 How can "lords" tremble at what they control
 Or "I" be slave to body and to soul?
 We are the real "I", free from that false "I"—
 The latter suffers grief as days pass by.
 That "I" meant bad luck for you, while ours meant
 For us good fortune that was heaven-sent.'
 If you had not had this mean 'I' then would 4135
 Good fortune have arrived which is so good?
 In thanks for fleeing temporality
 Upon the gallows we advise for free:
 The gallows are your journey's *Boraq*,* and
 Your realm's delusory. Won't you understand?
 This is our life—in death's form it's concealed;
 Yours: death which in the husk of life is sealed.
 Light seems a fire, and fire light—here's confusion.
 That's why it's called '*the world of mere illusion*.'
 Beware, don't rush! Become naught first, and then 4140
 On setting rise up from the East again!
 The heart was stunned by the 'Eternal I,'
 But this 'I' is a frigid, shameful 'I'.
 Through that I without self, souls feel so glad
 They've left this world's 'I' as if something bad.
 They flee this 'I', become an 'I' that's true—
 Bravo to that 'I'! It blocks suffering too.
 As it flees, selfhood races after it
 Once it sees it has no self left in it:
 If you seek it, it won't seek you just yet— 4145
 It seeks you when you die though, so don't fret!
 You are alive—corpse-washers can't wash you.
 You still seek—what you seek can't now seek you.
 If intellect could solve such mysteries
 Razi would have the mystic's expertise.*
 He was *one who did not taste it to know*;

His intellect's confusion would just grow.
This 'I' can't be unveiled by contemplation—

It's just unveiled through self-annihilation.
Intellects fall in their failed quest for it 4150

In incarnation and commingling's pit.*
Ayaz, through nearness you have passed away
Just like a star in sunlight of the day,
Like semen you're transmuted bodily,
Not duped by incarnation's heresy.

Forgive, You in whose coffer is forgiveness,
Whose mercy is the foremost in its kindness.

Yet who am I to say "Forgive!" and plea
To You, the Sultan of the order '*Be!*'*
Who am I to exist when You're around, 4155
You in Whose 'I' all I's of ours are found?

Ayaz sees himself as a wrongdoer while intervening and begs forgiveness for this—he sees himself as doing wrong by begging forgiveness. This self-abasement comes from recognition of the majesty of the king, for the Prophet has said, 'I know God better than you and fear him more than you.' God said, 'Only God's servants with knowledge really fear Him.'

'How can I make the angry merciful?'

Ayaz said, 'Or teach being affable
I now deserve a million slaps, it's true
If I'm subjected to those slaps by you.

What can I say before you? Am I free
To now remind of generosity?
What is not known to you? Nothing at all.

Where can I find a thing you don't recall?
You who are free from ignorance, whose knowledge 4160
Forgetfulness can't hide things from or damage,
You deemed a nobody a somebody:

With light you've made him sun-like totally.
Please listen, since you made me somebody,
When I beg you for generosity!

Since you removed me from the form that held me
 That intercession was your doing really.
 And since this home's been emptied of its "I"
 Nothing that's here belongs to me. That's why.
 You made my prayer like water that flows by— 4165
 Please now accept it and give a reply!
 You brought about this prayer in the first instance,
 And finally you're the hope for its acceptance.
 Forgive for my sake, please, each single thing
 So I can boast about the whole world's king.
 I was so smug and pain-filled totally—
 The king made me pain-filled men's remedy.
 I was a hell with evil and with dread—
 Grace's hand made me Kawsar-like instead.
 Hell burned away with vengeance many men— 4170
 I made them all grow quickly back again.'

What's Kawsar's work? It's letting all burned men
 Grow fully back and be enriched again.
 Drop by drop it declares munificence:
 'What hell's consumed I will restore at once.'
 Hell is just like the cold that is autumnal,
 O rosegarden, while Kawsar's spring is vernal.
 Hell is like death and the grave's soil that fills it—
 Kawsar is like the blast of the last trumpet.
 O you whose bodies burned in hell, God rather 4175
 With His deep kindness pulls you to His Kawsar.
 Eternal God, since Your Great Mercy told it:
 '*I made them so that through Me they might profit.*'*
 '*Not that I profit from them*'* is Your kindness
 Through which deficient ones can realize wholeness.
 Forgive these body-worshippers now! Pardoning
 Is better coming from the Sea of Pardoning
 Pardon from creatures is like floods and streams.
 Towards the ocean race the horseman teams.
 Each night from shredded hearts requests for pardons 4180
 Come heading for You, King, just like the pigeons.
 You make them fly away at dawn's first light,

Imprisoning them in bodies till the night,
 And then, at night, flapping their wings they fly
 With love for palace rooftops from the sky,
 So they can snap the thread that joins them to
 The body, then reach fortune-giving You.
 Flapping wings in the air and safe from falling
 Back headlong, saying: '*To Him we're returning.*'*
 The call '*Come!*'* comes from That One's generous way, 4185
 Beyond which grief and strong desire won't stay.
 'You suffered much in exile on the earth,
 O noble ones, so you'd then know My worth.
 Stretch your legs in My tree's shade and quit stress,
 Then here enjoy some lovely drunkenness.
 Legs weary from the path of all the faithful,
 Those cared for now by houris who're eternal.
 The houris are both kind and flirting, saying:
 These Sufis have returned from their wayfaring.
 Sufis as pure as the sun's light, who had 4190
 Fallen on earth and dirt that was so bad.
 Both pure and unaffected, they return
 As sunlight heads back to its orb in turn.

'This group of sinners, sir,' Ayaz now says
 'Have all regretted their mistaken ways:
 They've realized their faults and sins committed
 Though by the king's dice they had been defeated.
 They turn their face to you with sighs today,
 O you whose kindness clears for them the way—
 Give soiled ones access to your cleansing places 4195
 And the Euphrates of Your pardon's graces,
 So they can wash longstanding sin away
 Then line up with the purest ones to pray,
 Among those ranks that can't be counted up,
 Immersed in the light of "*We're those lined up.*"'*

When all this discourse reached such a description
 The pen broke and the paper ripped—can someone

Measure with just a saucer the vast sea,
 And can lambs carry lions easily?
 If you are veiled, stop being veiled so you 4200
 Can see the Marvellous King then in plain view.
 That drunk group smashed Your goblet, but those who
 Are drunk on You can still be pardoned too.
 Their drunkenness on wealth and luck in fact
 Came from Your wine, You who're sweet in each act.
 They're drunk on Your own picking them for favour—
 Forgive those drunk on You please, O Forgiver.
 A hundred vats of wine still can't compare
 With being addressed by You—such joy is rare.
 You made me drunk, so don't now punish me 4205
 Because the law does not think drunks should be!
 Inflict it when I sober up, for I
 Will never sober up until I die!
 Whoever's drunk, Bestower, from Your cup
 Is free from punishment and sobering up,
Forever drunk from self-annihilation;
 None come back once effaced in Your elation.
 Your grace says, 'Go, you who have wagered now
 Yourself in My love's yoghurt drink somehow:
 You've fallen in my yoghurt like a gnat— 4210
 Not drunk, you are the wine itself like that.'
 Gnat, vultures will get drunk on you when you
 Ride on that honey's sea the way you do.
 Mountains are mere motes when they're drunk on you;
 You hold the point, the compass, and line too.
 You make upheaval others fear shake, scared;
 Each precious pearl is cheap when it's compared.
 If God gave me five hundred mouths I would,
 O soul and world, describe you as I should.
 Knower of secrets, I've one mouth and that 4215
 Near you, from shame, becomes crushed fully flat.
 I'm not more crushed than Non-existence and
 These people come from Its mouth to this land:
 From the Unseen a million forms in place
 Wait to spring forth with goodness and with grace.
 From begging You, now spinning fills my head,

O You before whose kindness I am dead.
All our desire comes from Your own direction:
Wayfarers travel due to God's attraction.
Does dust rise up without wind forcing motion? 4220
Can ships set sail at all without an ocean?
None near the Water of Life die—that water
Is just dregs though compared with Your pure water.
The Water of Life is the prayer direction
For those who love life—gardens bloom from that one.
Those who drink death live through His love and they
Don't want the Water of Life's draught today:
When Your love's water gave its hand, from then
Water of Life was worthless to these men.
Each soul's revived by that same Water of Life 4225
But You're the Water of the Water of Life.
Death's resurrection You gave every moment
So I could see Your kindness is so potent.
Dying became like sleep to me, since I
Am sure of Resurrection when I die.
If all the seas become mirages too
You'll drag them back by their ears. They're from You—
Reason trembles at death while love is fearless;
Rocks aren't scared of rain like mud that's porous.

This is the fifth book of *The Masnavi*. 4230
It's like the stars that now shine over me.
Not all can navigate well from a star—
The boatman though can read them from afar.
Others just gaze at them, so unaware
That signs of fortune can be read up there.
At night become acquainted till the morning
With such sublime stars that are devil-burning!
Each blocks the evil-thinking devil there
By pouring oil from their fort through the air,
So, for the devil, stars are like a scorpion— 4235
To Jupiter though they're a *close companion*.
And while the devil's shot by Sagittarius
Water for crops and fruit comes from Aquarius.

Though Pisces wrecks the ship that is astray,
For friends it makes ships Taurus-like today.
Though, Leo-like, the sun rips into night,
Rubies gain robes of honour from its light.
Beings have raised up from Non-being their head,
Poison for some, for others sweets instead.
Become loved, wipe your bad traits clean away
So you'll eat sweets from poison jars today:
Omar met no harm from the poison given
Since sweets were cures for his discerning vision.

BOOK SIX

Prose Introduction

The sixth of the books of rhyming couplets and mystical proofs, which are a lamp for the darkness of imaginings, confusion, doubt, and uncertainty. This lamp cannot be perceived with animal instincts, since the station of beasts is the lowest of the low, for they have been created for the sake of the form of the world, and a circle has been drawn around their senses and perceptions which they cannot pass beyond: 'that is the ordainment of The Mighty, The Wise'. That is to say, He has shown the extent of the reach of their action and the range of their perception, just as every star has a certain orbit and sphere of action in the heavens up to which its actions can reach, and just as the ruler of a city, whose rule is effective there, does not have authority outside of that city's subjects. May God preserve us from His own imprisoning and sealing and from the veils He has placed over the veiled. Amen, O Lord of Creation.*

Exordium

Hosamoddin, you who're life of the heart,
Desire's been burning much for the sixth part.
Through the attraction from a sage like you
A 'Hosam book'* comes to the whole world's view.
Spiritual one, I'll bring a gift with me
Of the sixth part, to end *The Masnavi*.
From these six books give light to six dimensions,
*So all can then do circumambulations!**
Love's higher than five senses, six dimensions;
Its goal is the Beloved's strong attractions.
Perhaps permission will come later, so
Secrets can be shown, those that one can know,
With explanations that are more precise
Than detailed yet veiled hints sensed by the wise.
It's just a secret if you can perceive it—
In the denier's ear it's not a secret.
God, the Creator, gives the invitation
Without care for acceptance or rejection.
For centuries Noah called men to His way,
But their rejection grew more anyway—
Did he pull back the reins of speech, impatient?
Did he creep to the cave where one stays silent?
He asked, 'Do caravans hide in the dark
Because they hear the dogs begin to bark?
Or will the full moon halt its orbit motion
That moonlit night due to the dogs' commotion?
The moon spreads light, dogs bark—they each thus act
According to their nature. Here's a fact:
Destiny's given each tasks that fit best
One's nature, and this is all a big test.
The dog won't stop its howls and I'm the moon:
How could I quit my orbit's route so soon?'
Vinegar will increase acidity

5

10

15

So adding sweetness will be necessary.
Wrath's vinegar and mercy's honey—they
Form oxymel when mixed in the right way.
Sufficient honey must be used to blend
Or else you'll spoil the oxymel, my friend.
People poured vinegar on Noah then;
The Ocean poured more sugar yet again
As help from Bounty's Ocean—it was more
Than vinegar the worldly men could pour.
Who's '*one but like a thousand*'? God's Friend is—
Rather he's centuries through His loftiness.
The great seas kneel to show their recognition
To the vat which has channels from The Ocean,
Especially this one—when the others hear
The clamour and association near,
Their mouths turn bitter from their utter shame
That to the smallest came The Greatest Name.*
When this world joins with that one, you will see
It then recoil in shame immediately.

20

25

This is a lacking, limited expression;
The vile and the elect have no relation.
The crow caws in the vineyard, but why should
The nightingale stop singing what sounds good?
Each has a separate customer. It's clear
*He does what He wills** in the market here.
Thorns are sweet food for every fire you'll find,
Rose scent is food though for the drunken mind.
Filth is so hateful to us, but it's sugar
To pigs and dogs—it's like their sweetest halva.
If filthy ones should start to cause pollution
Waters will start their own purification.
Although the snakes spread venom all around
As bitter men cause us distress, we've found
Bees in the mountains, hives, and trees, whose feat
Is making stores of honey that tastes sweet.
However much of poison there may be
The antidotes remove them rapidly.

30

35

The world is all at war with so much grief,
Mote versus mote, faith versus unbelief:
One mote flies left in seeking while another
Flies to the right in its own search, no matter;
One flies above, one flies below, now glean
Their warring through the way each one will lean.
Their warring's due to warring that is inward—
Know that this discord came out from that discord.

Warring of motes that are annihilated

40

In the sun can't be told nor calculated—
That mote's breath and its soul effaced in it,
Its warring is the sun's now, isn't it?
Stillness has left it and so has its moving—
Why? All because of '*To Him we're returning*':*
We've come back from ourselves to Your Sea, plus
We'll suck on That Source that has suckled us.
You who've stayed with the branches out of fear,
Don't boast of roots when you have no roots here!

Our war and peace are in The Essence's Light:

45

Not ours, *between God's fingers they're held tight*.*
The wars of nature, words and actions—they're
Wars of this world's parts, though wars that can scare.
The world's maintained by such war—look now at

The elements for answers to solve that:
The elements are four strong pillars and
They keep the world's roof up, but understand
These pillars are destroyers of each other:
The pillar that destroys the fire is water.

The world is built on opposites, so we,

50

For good or bad, are warlike similarly.
My states are mutually opposed—detect
How each one is opposed in its effect.
When I am always my own highway robber
How can I be harmonious with another?
Look at my states: a surge of troops that fight
Each other so ferociously with spite.
Look at the dangerous war in you—why bother
To busy yourself with wars of another?

Perhaps God's spared you this war and brought you
 To the One-coloured World of peace that's true?
 That World's pure and eternal seeing as it
 Does not contain a single opposite.

This world's made up of opposites we see
 And rots, while that one lasts eternally.
 That Peerless One banned opposites from heaven:
 'No sun, nor freezing cold here!' His decision.
 Colourlessness is colour's origin,
 Peace is war's source, from which all wars begin.
 That World's the source of this world full of hurting;
 Union's the source of severance and parting.
 O mister, why all this disharmony?
 Why did oneness bring multiplicity?
 Four elements the roots, we are their bough—
 The elements reveal themselves here now.
 The soul's jewel's not divisible—we see
 It's nature's not this: it's Divinity.

View wars that are the source of peace as being
 Just like Mohammad's: for God's sake in meaning.
 He is victorious in both worlds—to tell it
 Is far beyond the human's mouth's full limit.
 Though one can't drink the Oxus up entirely
 One still must drink enough to stop being thirsty.
 If you are thirsting for the spiritual sea,
 Breach through the island of *The Masnavi*!
 Find a way through, so every individual
 Moment you'll see *The Masnavi* as spiritual.
 When wind blows all the straws away that cover
 The water, it shows it has just one colour.
 Look at the coral branches and then view
 The fruits grown with the spirit's water too!
 When it's beyond words, sounds, and breath—all three—
The Masnavi leaves them to join The Sea.
 Speakers, hearers, and words as well, my friend,
 All three become the spirit in the end.
 Bread's giver, its recipient and pure bread

Become one and will turn to soil instead.
 But their reality back in the past
 As three distinct ones is still meant to last:
 Form's turned to soil, not the Real Meaning though— 75
 If one claims that, say: 'No, it hasn't! No!'
 All three await in the world of the spirit;
 Spirit's now fleeing form, then staying in it:
 Once the command comes: 'Enter forms!' they enter,
 And they strip off forms too when He should order.
 'Creation and command are His':* creation
 Is form, command is spirit on creation—
 Rider and ridden follow God's decree,
 Body's outside, soul's in the sanctuary.
 When He wants water to fill jars the King 80
 Tells the soul's army, 'Ride!' When He should bring
 The souls back up above they'll hear the cry:
 'Dismount!' from angels helping Him on high.
 This discourse will become now that much finer—
 Don't add more firewood that makes flames soar higher,
 In case the lower pots boil fast: you know
 The small pot of perceptions hangs so low.
 The Glorious Holy One makes orchards, then
 Conceals them in a cloud of words from men.
 The cloud of words and sounds will screen from view; 85
 Only the apple's scent can still come through—
 You should inhale much more of this scent in,
 So it drags you to your own origin.
 Preserve the scent, avoid congestion's bother!
 Protect yourself from coldness of the vulgar,
 So they don't block your nose because their air
 Is colder than the winter—please take care!
 They're frozen, inert bodies—all around
 Their breaths seem to come out of a snow mound.
 When ground is covered by their shroud of snow 90
 Swing with Hosam's sword and its sun-like glow!
 Lift up God's sword now from the East and raise
 The entry way's heat with those Eastern rays!

Sun rays stab snow with daggers—from that snow
 Floods pour from mountains to the ground below.
 This Sun's not from the East nor West, all day
 And night it fights astronomers to say:
 'Why did you make stars lacking mastery
 Blindly your *qebla* guide instead of me?'
 And Abraham's words make you all upset
 Because he said: '*I don't love those that set.*'*
 You'd slave for that moon just for Qozzah's* pleasure:
*The moon was split** pains you in no small measure.
 You would deny the sun will one day fold
 You think its rank's the highest, truth be told.
 You think the star determines weather too—
 And '*when the star shall fall*'* displeases you.
 The moon's force isn't more than bread's, my friend—
 Love for bread often caused men's lives to end.
 Venus does not have more of an effect
 Than water, which leaves many bodies wrecked.
 Love of them fills your soul, while friendly counsel
 Strikes your ear's outer skin and that is final:
 Our counsel does not move you from within,
 Nor does yours move us—know the state we're in!
 (Unless the Friend should send a special key—
 Heaven's keys are that Friend's own property.)

95

100

This discourse is like star and moon, but when
 God's will's not there they can do nothing then.
 The Star beyond directions makes impressions
 That strike on ears which seek out revelations:
 'Come from your place to space beyond direction
 So the wolf can't devour you with delection!'

Since Its pearl-scattering radiance is like that
 The sun of this world is more like a bat.
 The seven blue spheres are all serving It;
 The moon will wax and wane too just for It.
 Venus will grasp at It to beg instead;
 Jupiter offers its soul, steps ahead.
 Saturn desires to kiss Its hand, but it

105

110

Feels totally unworthy and unfit.
 Mars wounded hands and feet, all just for It.
 Mercury smashed a hundred pens for It.
 All these stars fight astronomers—they said:
 ‘You let the soul go—colours lure instead.
 He is the soul; we’re colours here and dots.’
 The stars’ soul is the star of His mere thoughts:
 What’s ‘thought’ here? All is Holy Light, ‘thought’ just
 A word for your sake, thinker, if you must.
 Every star has above a constellation—
 Ours is too big for any constellation:
 Can what burns space enter then into spaces?
 Unlimited light can’t be blocked from places.
 Comparison and image are still useful,
 So weaker seekers might still be successful,
 A parable, not an analogy,
 To thaw the frozen mind effectively.
 The intellect has weak legs, since we’ve found
 The heart’s been wrecked although the body’s sound:
 Their minds embroiled with this world’s candy, they
 Will never quit their own lusts, come what may.
 When they make claims their breasts, like suns, are shining,
 But their endurance is as brief as lightning.
 A scholar showing off his skills with glee
 Is like the faithless world: no loyalty.
 Loving himself, he grows a massive head,
 Yet he’s lost in the belly just like bread.
 These attributes might turn good nonetheless—
 Evil won’t last when one seeks righteousness.
 Though egotism’s foul like semen, friend,
 Turn spiritual and find light in the end!
 Once minerals face plants they then will see
 Life growing in them from their fortune’s tree.
 Once plants face animated souls they’ll then,
 Like Khezzr, drink Water of Life, worthy men.
 When the soul faces the Beloved fully
 It settles down in life that lasts eternally.

115

120

125

An inquirer asks about a bird who would sit on the city's wall, whether its head is more noble and esteemed or its tail? The preacher gives a response that fits his level of understanding.

One day a congregant asked his own preacher:

‘You are the pulpit’s lofty well-versed speaker—

I have a question, wise one. Solve for me

130

This question in our gathering generously:

A bird’s perched on the city wall—its head

Or tail, which one’s best?’ Then the preacher said:

‘If its head faces to the city’s centre

And it’s tail to the country, then the former.

If its tail’s closer to the city, then

Its tail’s revered, its head shunned by wise men.’

Birds fly with wings to their nests, congregation;

The wings of men are each man’s aspiration.

If lovers get soiled with good things and evil

135

Look only at their aspiration, people!

A falcon might be white and peerless too,

But hunting mice makes it base in our view.

If an owl seeks the king, forget its hood—

It has the falcon’s head for being so good.

A human who’s no bigger than dough trays

Has gone beyond the heavens through such ways.

Has the sky heard, ‘*We’ve honoured*’, * which God said

For humans, though they suffer grief and dread?

Have land and sky been offered eloquence,

140

Appetite, beauty, and intelligence?

Have you once shown the sky your lovely face

Or power of thought, which works at such fast pace?

Or did you show the bathhouse drawings once

Your lovely body with its elegance?

You shun the drawings of the houri kind

And show instead a crone who is half-blind—

What does she have which they lack that she could

Steal you away from them? What is so good?

You won’t explain, so I will: reason, sense,

145

Spirit, perception and her diligence:
There is a soul in that crone, none at all
In those mere drawings on the bathhouse wall.
But if the latter moved then they alone
Would pull you to them quickly from that crone.

What's soul? Awareness of both good and evil:
Joy at goodness, crying at harm to people.
Soul's essence and its secret's being conscious:
You have more soul, friend, if you are more conscious.

Consciousness comes from spirit—more of this
Is what the Man of God's distinction is.

Since consciousness belongs to soul, he who
Has more of it has a more strong soul too.
The soul's world's consciousness, my friends, completely—
Someone with no soul lacks all knowledge really.
There's consciousness that is beyond our nature;
Souls seem inert in that realm that's much greater.

The first soul is God's court's manifestation;
The Soul of Souls is God's manifestation.

Angels were intellect and spirit only—

A new soul came and they became its body.
When, by good fortune, they joined with The Spirit,
Like bodies, they became a servant to It.

That is why Satan turned his head away:

A dead limb, he would not join in their way,
So he was clearly not devoted to It—

The broken hand does not obey the spirit.
The spirit's not harmed by a broken hand—
It can make it, since it has the command.

If only ears could hear, there's one more secret:

The sugar needs a parrot fit to eat it.
For special parrots there's a greater sugar;
Ordinary parrots are denied that sugar.
Those who just pose as Sufis get no taste—
It's spiritual meaning, not hot air to waste.
Jesus's ass is not denied this sugar,

150

155

160

By nature though, it thinks straw is superior.
If candy pleased the donkey, He would then
Have poured tons for it, as for worthy men.
The meaning of '*We sealed their mouths*'* is key

165

When on the spiritual itinerary,
So the seal on his lips might peel away
Through the Seal of the Prophets'* mystic way.
The seals left by the Prophets previously
Were peeled off by Mohammad's faith, you see.
Unopened locks had been left and were opened

By the most strong hand of '*We now have opened*.'*
He's intercessor in both worlds: likewise
In this world of the faith and paradise.

Here he will tell you, 'You show them the way!'
'You show them now the moon!' he then will say.
His work both openly and privately

170

Is: '*Guide my people, for they cannot see*!'*
His breath could open both doors, which is rare.
In both worlds he'd get answers to his prayer.

He has become 'the seal' since nobody
Was like him, nor shall any ever be:
When craftmasters excel what others do
Don't you say, 'Now this craft's been sealed by you.'

In opening seals you are The Seal, most glorious.
Among the soul-bestowers, you're most generous.

175

The gist is this: Mohammad's intimation
Is revelation inside revelation.
A million blessings on his soul and we
Send blessings to his mystic progeny.
That royal offspring of his are so fortunate,
Born of the substance of his heart and spirit.

Whether from Baghdad or Herat or Rayy
They're his, beyond the water and the clay.
Where rose boughs grow the flowers are roses still
Where wine vats bubble, they contain wine still.

180

If in the West the sun should raise its head
It's the same sun, not something else instead.
Creator, through Your veiling please for me

Deny fault-finders now the power to see.
God said, 'I have blindfolded everyone
Of the bad-natured from the Peerless Sun.
Even that Sun's stars are concealed like that
From glances of the vile, defiant bat.'

Contempt for the rotten reputations which block the spiritual experience of faith and are a reason for weakness in sincerity and waylay a hundred thousand idiots the same way that sheep waylaid an effete man such that he could not pass them: the effete man asked the shepherd, 'Will these sheep of yours bite me?' He answered, 'If you are a man and in you there is a vein of manhood they will be devoted to you, but if you are effete each will become a dragon for you.' Another one, on seeing the sheep, turns back immediately and does not even inquire, fearing, 'If I stop to ask, the sheep will jump on me and bite me!'

Hosamoddin, the light of the religion,
Spirit polisher, guidance's own sultan,
Please give vast pastures to *The Masnavi*,
Spirit to its tales' forms too, generously,
So that its words become soul totally
And fly to the soul's home eternally!
If it was through your work they entered in
The trap of words through spirit's origin,
May your life here be like Khezh's, soul-expanding,
Giving a helping hand, and everlasting.
Like Khezh and Elyaas, may you stay in place
So earth can turn to sky soon through your grace.
I'd tell a hundredth of your loveliness,
But this vile evil eye leads to distress.
I've suffered soul-destroying wounds, all by
That venomous and nasty evil eye.
I won't explain your state as a clear matter
But through expounding on states of another.
This is one of the heart's tales, this excuse.
Its feet get stuck in mud, which makes it lose.
Hundreds of hearts and souls love the Creator,

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But evil eyes and ears block like a veiler.
Abu Taleb, the uncle of the Prophet
Feared his tribe's hatred too much then to scoff it:
'What will the Arabs say to me? They'll say:
"His nephew made him change from our faith's way."'”
The Prophet told him, 'Be a Muslim too!
Convert, so with God's help, I'll fight for you!'
'*But it will be heard openly,*' he said.
'*Secrets when shared by more than two soon spread.*

The Arabs will all talk about me due
To this and I'll be wretched in their view.'
If he'd had his Eternal Grace's portion,
He wouldn't have felt scared of God's attraction.
O Helper of those who seek help, please now
Help us against one's free will's acts somehow!
The heart's tales and deceits have beaten me
So much I can't groan any more. Come see!
Who am I when the heavens' wheel would seek
Help when free will would ambush. It felt weak:

'O Generous and Enduring God, save me
From this free will's two branches' pillory!'
The one-way pull on the straight path, Most Kind One,
Is better than the two ways of confusion.
Though You're the goal of both ways totally
The dualism gives souls agony.
Though there's no other target there but you
Battles are not like banquets in our view.
Listen to the Qur'an explaining it:

The verse of '*But they shrank from bearing it.*'*
It's just like war—the heart's perplexity:
'Is this one better or that one for me?'
Here fear and hope for gain clash with each other,
Advancing and retreating like a warrior.

*A prayer seeking refuge in God from the dissension caused by free will
and by those things that facilitate free will, for the earth and the heavens
feared free will and things that led to it, while Man's nature is addicted to*

200

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seeking one's free will and things that lead to it, such that, if he is ill, he sees little free will and desires health, which facilitates free will, making it increase. And if he wants a high rank it is so that his free will get increased. Excess of free will and what leads to it caused the wrath of God to fall on past nations. No one ever saw Pharaoh lacking means.

At first the ebb and flow came from Your will,
Otherwise, Glorious One, this sea was still.
Help me, You who are sending me affliction,
You whose affliction turns men into women!
You used a source to first make me perplexed—
Kindly use that to leave my mind clear next!
For how long will this suffering last? Cease then!
Bestow on me one path—don't give me ten!
I'm like a very thin and suffering camel
Wounded by my free will shaped like a saddle.
The pannier now weighs down one side, but then
Something weighs down the other side again.
Throw off me this unbalanced load, so I
Can see the pure ones' garden there on high.
Like cave companions, not awake *but sleeping*,*
In bounty's orchard I'll continue eating.
I'll lie down left then right, but I won't roll
Unless involuntarily like a ball.
O Lord of Faith, it's through Your turning me
That I turn left or right alternately.
For a millennium I was flying there
Without a will just like motes in the air.
Though I've forgotten how I used to be,
Travelling in sleep recalls it all for me.
I flee this crucifix and leap away
To pastures of the spirit, you could say.
I suck the milk of those days that have gone
From the wet nurse, sleep, O Eternal One.
All flee their self-existence and free will
Toward their drunken side for good or ill,
So for one moment they can flee being sober

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225

And live with drinking wine's shame hanging over.
 All know existence is a snare as well
 And that thought through self-will is just like hell.
 Good man, they flee self into selflessness
 By some activity or drunkenness.
 You pull the soul back from Non-being, since it
 Entered there without Your commanding it.
Neither Mankind nor Jinn can ever flee
The rage of this world's realms successfully.
Only through Guidance's power can one go
Beyond the seven heavens. As you know
Guidance comes just from that authority
That guards pure souls from meteors carefully.
 Until effaced no one can actually
 Enter the Court of Holy Majesty.
 What is the meaning of the heavenly ascension?
 Non-being: the mystics' law code and religion.

 The fleece coat and old boots became no less
 Than Ayaz's prayer niche for neediness,*
 Although the king's beloved, good outside
 As well as being good on the inside,
 Now free from pride, pretence, and arrogance,
 A mirror for the king's fair countenance.
 From self-existence since he'd broken free
 The outcome of his work was praiseworthy.
 Ayaz's steadfastness was strong inside,
 Since he was cautious due to fear of pride.
 He had been purified and came at once
 To strike the neck of self and arrogance.
 He used such methods as a teaching here
 Or due to wisdom, not provoked by fear.
 Or since the sight of boots would simply please,
 For self-conceit would block Non-Being's breeze.
 Then Non-Being's tomb might open and let in
 The breeze of life to waft with ease within.
 After this station, silk and wealth found in it
 Seem like a chain on the free-flowing spirit.

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245

It sees the chain of gold and then instead
Falls in a pit far from the fields ahead.
It looks like heaven, but it's really hell,
A poisonous snake in rose-cheeked form as well.
The fire can't harm believers. Still, it's better
To pass it by and not tempt fate, my brother.
Though hell won't send harm the believer's way,
Heaven is better for him every day.
Beware dim ones of this rose-cheeked one who
Turns to hellfire when embraced by you!

250

Story about the Indian slave who had secretly fallen in love with his master's daughter. The slave found out when the daughter got engaged with a nobleman and he became ill, wasting away. No physician could diagnose his sickness and he did not have the gall to tell.

A lord once had an Indian slave whom he
Had nurtured and revived most generously.
He'd taught him sciences and manners too,
Lit learning's candle in his heart anew.
From childhood that kind man had brought him up
With kindness and good things none can weigh up.
This lord had his own very lovely daughter
Who was so fine and fair, with a good nature,
So, once she came of age, suitors would come
For her with dowries of a massive sum.
From every nobleman across the land
Someone would come each moment for her hand.
The lord thought, 'Money doesn't last: by day
It comes and then by night it spills away.
A handsome face, too, is of no avail
Because one snakebite quickly turns it pale.
Noble birth also isn't so exciting,
For they find wealth and horses still beguiling:
Many a nobleman's son has brought shame,
By acting wildly, to his father's name.'
Do not admire a learned person either

255

260

Though most refined—Satan was too, remember!
Though he had knowledge, he lacked love—that day
He saw in Adam just a form of clay.*
You may have detailed, nuanced knowledge, mister
But that won't help your eyes see what lies deeper.
You just see beard and turban, and still need
Someone to tell you of your every deed—
O mystic, you don't need such an announcer—
You see all for yourself; your light's profounder.
Faith, righteousness and piety are what count,
Which lead to fortune in a large amount.

265

He chose as groom a very pious man
Who also was the pride of his whole clan.
The women said, 'He has no handsomeness,
Nor wealth, nor means, nor any nobleness.'
'Faith and renunciation have more worth—
Without gold he's a treasure on this earth.'
When it grew clear his daughter would be married
Through outfits and large gifts that were being carried,
The little slave in that house very quickly
Became weak, wretched, and then very sickly,
Ailing like someone with tuberculosis,
Physicians couldn't tell which sickness was this.
Wisdom said his affliction's from the heart.
The body's treatment's useless for the heart.
He didn't breathe a word about his state
And what had caused the sore chest pangs of late.
One night the lord asked his wife, 'Would you please
Ask him precisely what is his disease—
You're like a mother to him, so he might
Reveal to you his awful, painful plight.'
On hearing this, his wife knew straight away
She should approach the sick slave the next day.
She combed his hair since he was a sick person
With utter kindness and so much affection.
Like mothers who are kind she soothed that man
Until his explicating talk began:

270

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‘I did not once expect you’d give her hand
 To someone unknown from a foreign land.
 My master’s daughter! I feel sick within.
 What a shame to go somewhere far from kin!’
 The mistress got up angry, longed to pound
 That man and send him hurtling to the ground
 From their roof: ‘Who’s this Indian’s son to long for
 His far superior master’s lovely daughter?
 But patience is best.’ She regained composure,
 Then told her husband: ‘Listen to this wonder!
 That wretched slave betrayed us—we had thought
 He could be trusted fully; it seems not.’

The master of the household tells his wife to be patient: ‘Don’t bother the slave! I’ll make him quit his desire without resorting to that: neither the skewer will get burned nor the meat remain uncooked.’

‘Have patience. Tell him this!’ the lord then said,
 “We’ll break it up so you’ll have her instead.”
 I’ll take this out of his heart—watch and see
 How I repel him with my strategy!
 Gladden his heart! Say: “Know that this is true:
 Our daughter’s perfect match is none but you.
 Fine suitor, we did not know this back then,
 But now we know you are the best of men.
 Our fire’s in our own hearth, under our nose—
 You’re Majnun for our Layli,* heaven knows.”
 So he’ll have such sweet thoughts because of that:
 Sweet thoughts are what will make a person fat—
 While animals get fat from hay and fodder,
 Men will get fat from eminence and honour.
 Man gets fat through his ear, from what he’s hearing,
 While animals get fat when they are feeding.’
 His wife said, ‘How can my mouth ever say
 Such a disgraceful vile thing anyway?
 Talk drivell for that wretch’s sake now—why?
 Just tell that devilish traitor now to die!’

He then said, 'Have no fear! With flattery
His sickness will leave him quite rapidly.
O sweetheart, let me drive him then away—
First let him find health and not waste away!'

Once she spoke like this to the sick man, he
Felt earth was small for his entirety:
He fattened and turned red, bloomed like a rose,
Then gave a thousand thanks and finally chose
To say, 'O mistress, dear, don't let this be
Instead a really awful trick on me!'

300

The master threw a party, where he said:
'I want to find Faraj a bride to wed.'
Faraj would then get teased much by the rest:
'O Faraj, may your marriage be so blessed!'
The promise seemed more true to him this way;
His sickness thus went totally away.

Then on the wedding night with such precision
They henna-dyed a boy as if a woman,
Making his forearms like a real bride's then—
They made a rooster look just like a hen.

305

They dressed the rough lad in a bride's veil and
A gown fit for the loveliest in the land.
Leaving the pair, they snuffed the candle out
So that the Indian slave stayed with the lout.
The Indian screamed aloud much and he cried,
But, due to tambourines, none heard outside.

That and the yells of men and women there
Drowned out the servant's screams. None were aware.

The youth humped him until the break of day—
Can bags of flour survive dogs anyway?

310

They brought a basin then and some fresh linen
So he'd go to the bathhouse, a tradition.
His soul was wounded and his anus ripped
Like furnace-stokers' rags that have been stripped.
Returning home then, taken for a ride,
He saw his master's daughter dressed as bride.
Her mother sat there like a guard, so he

Couldn't try anything then desperately.
He looked at her a short while, then he said
While waving his arms wildly: 'May none wed
A person who's as terrible as you:
A nasty, wicked woman through and through!
Your face is like a lady's face by day,
At night your penis fits a donkey's bray.'

315

The pleasures of this world are similar:
Until they're tried they seem spectacular.
It looks like water when you're far from it—
You'll see it's a mirage on nearing it.
She's an old, stinking hag, but through her flirts
She shows herself as a young bride. It hurts,
So please beware—do not let rouge fool you!
Don't try to taste her poison-spiked drink too!
Since 'patience is the key to joy', be patient!
Don't fall, like Faraj, into straits of torment!
Her bait is clearly seen, but not the snare;
Her pleasures seem so sweet at first. Beware!

320

*Explanation of how this delusion was not just the Indian's, but rather
that every human is afflicted with such delusions at every stage, except
'those whom God has protected'.*

Since you're attracted to them, please take heed!
How long will you repent with wails of need?
Titles like 'king', 'prince', and 'vizier' contain
Hidden inside them death and deepest pain.
Be God's slave and walk like a steed while here,
Not carried on men's shoulders like a bier—
Ungrateful men want to be carried, so
They bring them corpse-like, bury them below.
If you see someone on a bier in dreams,
He'll rise in rank though that's not what it seems.
The powerful men have burdened others here
The same way some are burdened by a bier.
Don't burden anybody else—be sure

325

330

Not to seek leadership. Best to stay poor.
 Don't ride on people's necks lest you then suffer
 From painful gout in both your feet soon after.
 You will shun what you ride, be it a carriage:
 'You seemed a town, but you are just a village':
 Shun it while it looks like a town, so you
 Won't live in ruins—shun without ado
 While you're a hundred orchards and won't be
 The wretched ruins, helpless devotee!
 'If you want paradise,' the Prophet said,
 'Don't seek from people anything. Ahead
 When you do this I'll be your surety
 For paradise. God's union there you'll see.'
 Due to this guarantee, then each companion
 Became free from all others, on his stallion—
 If the whip fell from one's hand, he'd not need
 Another's aid_ he'd dismount and not plead.
 The One from Whose gifts no bad comes is knowing:
 Without you ever asking He's bestowing.
 On God's command, if you ask that's okay:
 Asking like that is the great prophets' way.
 When the Beloved orders it's not evil;
 Unbelief for His sake is faith, my people.
 Though His command bring bad things, they're superior
 To all the world's good things. This will get clearer.
 Don't curse shells damaged just on the outside,
 For they contain a million pearls inside.
 This topic's endless—go back to the sultan
 And be the same in nature as the falcon.
 Return, like pure gold, to the mine now rather,
 So your hands will be spared from showing anger,
 For when a form's let in the heart, my friend.
 Regret will make one curse it in the end.
 When amputation makes thieves feel regret
 They'll curse the lust for stealing, and you'll get
 To see the angry gestures from the hurt ones—
 Look at the amputees' gesticulations!
 The wretch, the murderer, and counterfeiter

335

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345

All curse past pleasures when they later suffer,
But theirs is just a moth-like, weak contrition—

350

Forgetfulness means they repeat the action:
From distance, like a moth, each sees as light

A flame and heads towards that luminous sight.
Once he arrives it burns his wings and he

First flees, then falls, and spills things clumsily.
Once more in lust for profit, just the same

He throws himself back at the candle's flame,
Gets singed and pulls back once again, regretful—

Greed in his heart made him drunk and forgetful.
The moment he recoils from getting burned

355

He shakes fists, like the Indian, having learned:
'Your face is radiant as the moon's soft light,
But you're false, burning those with you at night.'
He will forget repentance once again

*For God's made weak the tricks of lying men.**

*Concerning the interpretation of the verse 'Whenever they should kindle
a fire for war'. **

Whenever they should kindle fires for war

*God will extinguish all their fires once more.**

Such a man says, 'Heart, don't stay there!' But he

Forgets and therefore can't act steadfastly,
Not having sown sincerity's true seed—

360

God has made him forget the vital deed.
Although he'll strike his heart's flint, God will then
With His hand rub that bright star out again.

A story to expand this further.

A decent man heard footsteps late one night,
Fetched a torch-lighter to create some light.
The thief in darkness sat right there throughout—

When tinder caught fire he would put it out
With his own fingertips, since he was near

And in this way the fire would disappear.
 The owner thought the tinder just blew out, 365
 Not seeing that the thief would put it out:
 ‘This tinder was too moist, so when I tried,
 Due to its moistness, each spark quickly died.’
 It was so dark there that he couldn’t see
 The one who’d put it out repeatedly—
 The infidel’s eye’s blind and cannot see
 Who puts his heart’s fires out immediately.
 How can a knowledgeable person’s heart
 Not know there’s a first mover from the start:
 Why not ask, ‘How should night and day at all 370
 Come by themselves without a lord’s control?’
 You deal with things that you can rationalize—
 See how you lack true wisdom, wretch, grow wise!
 Is it more logical for houses to
 Have builders or not—say without ado!
 Do written words need writers first, my son,
 Or not? Which one is the more rational one?
 Can the ear’s ‘j’, the eye’s ‘o’, the mouth’s ‘u’
 Be forms without a writer then to you?
 Do candles lack a person who will light 375
 Them up or not, so they can then shine bright?
 Is craftsmanship more likely then to be
 By someone blind or someone who can see?
 Since you know He will overpower you
 And beat the club of strife on your head too,
 Like Nimrod why don’t you retaliate
 And fire an arrow up before it’s late,
 As Mongol soldiers fire towards the sky,
 To force back your soul’s torment from on high,
 Or flee Him if that’s something you can do— 380
 When you’re a pawn in his hand how can you?
 While in Non-Being you didn’t flee His hand,
 So, weakling, how will you now in this land?
 Seeking one’s wish is fleeing and means you
 Shed piety’s blood for His justice too.

This world's a snare; desire is this snare's bait—

Flee snares instead, turn back before it's late!

Go this way, see their numerous expansions!

The other way makes you see bad corruptions.

'Consult your hearts!' the Prophet counselled you,

'Even if your own mufti gives his view.'

Quit your desires, so mercy comes—you'll learn

That He requires this first from everyone.

Since you can't flee, serve Him now for His pardon

To move out from His gaol to His rosegarden.

When you keep watch continually as practice,

Lost one, you'll see the Judge and you'll see justice.

Although by being veiled you block your eye

How can the sun stop working in the sky?

385

How Shah Mahmud revealed to his emirs and those against Ayaz the reason why he received more of rank, proximity to him, and salary than they did in a way that no argument or objection to it could remain.

When the emirs all boiled with jealousy

They criticized their king eventually:

'Ayaz does not have thirty brains, does he,

To earn thirty emirs' full salary!'

The king went hunting with those thirty men

In deserts and in lofty mountains, then

He saw a caravan from far away

And ordered an emir, 'Go straight away

And ask that caravan that is encroaching

From which exact location they're approaching!'

He went to ask and came back: 'They're from Rayy.'

The king then asked, 'Their goal?' He couldn't say.

The king then asked another, 'Noble man,

Ask them where they are heading if you can!'

He went and came back: 'Yemen's where they're heading.'

The king then said, 'So what's the load they're taking?'

He stayed perplexed. The king said to another:

'Go and ask what they're taking with them yonder!'

390

395

‘Various things,’ he soon returned to say,
‘But mostly they’re transporting bowls from Rayy.’
‘When did they leave Rayy to now pass us here?’

400

This question stunned the slow-witted emir.
This carried on for thirty plus, but all
Were weak in judgement and weak overall.
At last he said to these emirs, ‘One day
I tested my Ayaz in the same way,
Asking: “Find out where they are from!” He went
And asked all questions when he was first sent:
Without advice or hint, Ayaz found out
Every detail I sought and left no doubt.
All that thirty emirs found out combined
Was brought by him in one trip of this kind.’

405

The emirs refute that argument by means of the fatalists’ error and the king answers them.

‘It’s from God’s favour,’ the emirs then said,
‘Not based on effort by Ayaz instead.
God gave the moon its fair face as its share—
And to the rose its scent that fills the air.’
‘That which comes from the self,’ the sultan said,
‘Is from omission or one’s will instead.’

If not, then why did Adam say, ‘O Lord,
We’ve wronged ourselves’*? Instead he’d have implored:
‘This sin was all because of destiny’—

410

Why should one try precaution pointlessly?
As Satan once said, ‘You led me astray!’*
You smash the cup and beat me anyway!’
Fate’s real and also slaves’ exertions, so
Don’t be like the cursed Satan, blind and low!
We’re left confused between our actions still—
How should this be if there were no free will?
And how can someone with bound hands and feet
Say, ‘I’ll do this and that: it is my feat.’
I can’t now wonder in my head if I

415

Might walk on sea waves or begin to fly?
 But I can wonder: 'Shall I go to Mosul
 Or Babylon for magic?' Where's most useful?
 If there's no power behind the vacillation,
 There'd be no options to cause hesitation—
 That's mockery! Don't blame fate! Why begin
 By blaming someone else for your own sin?
 Should someone else be punished for one's killing?
 Should someone else be fined for one's wine drinking?
 Inspect yourself! Witness your sin to see
 You move first, not your shadow actually.
 God's punishment won't be an error though—
 All-seeing God knows guilty ones below.
 Others don't get sick if you overeat;
 Others aren't paid for work that you complete.
 Which efforts didn't give you a return?
 Which sown crops didn't grow? When will you learn:
 Actions born of body and soul hold on
 To your coat tails like children clinging on.
 Actions will turn to forms in yonder sphere:
 For theft we set up prisoners' stocks down here—
 The stocks don't look like theft if you've seen them,
 But that's God choice and He knows well that realm.
 Since God inspires police chiefs here to make
 Such forms as stocks for justice's own sake,
 If you are knowledgeable and you're just
 How could fate pay you back with what's unjust?
 When human judges here don't do that then
 How could the Greatest Judge above all men?
 Only barley will grow if barley's sown.
 Who made the pledge for you to get the loan?
 For your own crime don't blame the innocent—
 Give your attention to the punishment!
 Blame yourself for the sin, since it's your sinning!
 Make peace with God's just way of disciplining!
 Bad deeds bring suffering, so before it's late
 See evil coming from yourself, not fate!
 Looking at fate makes you squint-eyed, we've found:

420

425

430

It makes dogs lazy and then kennel-bound.
Accuse yourself, young man! That's a good practice.
Don't blame the punishment that's part of justice!
Repent with courage, then choose the right way!
'Whoever does an atom's worth one day
Will see it.'* Do not let the self dupe you,
For the Divine Sun won't hide motes from view.
A physical mote's seen by everyone,
One visible before the outward sun—
The motes of inner thoughts are visible
Before that Sun of Truth Who's spiritual.

435

Story about the fowler who had wrapped himself in herbage and had drawn over his head a bunch of roses and tulips like a hat, so birds would imagine he was herbage. The clever bird suspected slightly that he might be a man: 'I've never seen grass this shape!' But it didn't completely work it out and got duped by his trick, because, while on first perception it had no decisive argument, on its second view of the trick it did have a decisive argument, namely greed and craving and these are particular to excessive need and poverty. The Prophet said, 'Poverty is almost unbelief.'

A bird flew to a meadow one fine day.
A fowler had put traps there to catch prey.
Some seeds were put inside them as the bait
And he was hiding nearby, where he'd wait
Wrapped up in leaves as camouflage completely
So that his prey might get bamboozled easily.
A little bird came near him unaware,
Then circled and flew to him waiting there:
It asked him, 'Why are you all clad in green
Among wild beasts in this plain? What a scene!'
'I'm an ascetic, cut off from all here,
Content with herbage that is growing near.
I chose asceticism and piety
On seeing my life's end in front of me.
My neighbour's death served as my warning bell;

440

445

It turned my business upside down as well.
Since in the end I'll be alone again
I won't get close to women or to men.
I'll turn towards my grave and my own end
And try to get close to the One True Friend.
It's better that I use my jaw less now
Since in the end it gets locked anyhow.'
You've learnt to wear clothes that have gold embroidery,
But you'll just wear one unstitched garment finally.
Why fix our hearts on faithless ones today
When we must face the soil, our source, that day?

450

While the four elements are family
We've tied our hopes to something temporary.
Man's body had been close and intimate
For years with them, yet we're forgetting it.
While spirits are from souls of yonder sphere
They've given up their source since they've been here:
A letter comes from their sphere to below
For spirits: 'O disloyal ones, we know
You've found some short-term friends and you have turned
Your face away from old friends, whom you've shunned.'
While children always love to play outside
By night fall they will all be dragged inside;
A small child might be naked, but still play—
A thief will snatch his coat and shoes away:
He's so preoccupied with playing that
He doesn't think about his shirt or hat—
When night falls playing can't continue, yet
He can't face going home without regret:
'*The world is just a toy*'*—did you not hear?
You've squandered all your goods and live with fear.
Before night falls look for your clothes! They matter.
Don't waste your day with pointless, empty chatter.
I've chosen now a desert as retreat;
I view as clothes-thieves all the men I meet.
Half of life's lost in love of sweethearts here,
Half of it stressed out due to foes you fear.

455

460

465

One stole our hat, another one our coat—
Like children we're absorbed and don't take note.
The night of death is near: it's time to quit
All of this play—do not return to it!
Ride on repentance, catch the thief and then
Take all the clothing he stole back again!
Repentance's steed is a marvel though:
Its cries reach up to heaven from below,
So guard this steed from that thief carefully,
The one who stole your coat so stealthily,
So he won't steal your steed from under you—
Guard that steed constantly, I'm warning you!

470

*Story about that person whose ram was stolen by thieves. Not content
with that, they stole his clothes too by means of a trick.*

A man once led his ram behind him, but
A thief approached and stole it with one cut
Of its lead—when the owner noticed, he
Searched left and right to find it, desperately.
He found the thief next to a well and he
Was moaning very loudly: 'Woe is me!'
He asked him, 'Why do you weep loudly, sir?'
'My purse of gold fell down there earlier.
If you'd go inside and then fetch it out
I'd gladly give one fifth of it—don't doubt!'
'A fifth of one full hundred coins!' He thought:
'With that much ten new rams can then be bought.
One door shuts, ten more open: one ram's lost,
But God gives back a camel for that cost!'
He took his clothes off and went down the well—
Quickly that thief then took his clothes as well.

475

To find the village you need a wise guide
Or lust brings you disasters with each stride:
The devil is a thief that brings strife—he
Will change his form like fancies, constantly.
His stratagems are only known by God—

480

Flee to Him to be safe from this cruel fraud!

The bird's debate with the fowler about monasticism and the meaning of the monasticism that the Prophet Muhammad forbade for his followers, saying: 'There is no monkery in Islam.'

The bird then told the fowler: 'Quit seclusion.

Monkery's shunned in our wise Prophet's vision:

The Messenger forbade such monkery—

Why have you started it? Such idiocy!

The Friday prayer's a must—pray it with people,

Enjoining all that's good and shunning evil,

Enduring how bad-natured men treat you,

Yet benefiting all the way clouds do:

"*The best ones benefit the others.*"* Why,

If you're not stone, mix with the clay that's dry?

So live amongst the blessed community

And give the Prophet's *sunnah* sovereignty!'

'One whose intellect's weak,' the fowler said,

'Next to the wise is like a brick instead.

Those who seek bread are donkey-like—to be

Mixing with them is actual monkery,

For all except God crumbles soon away

And everything that's due will come one day.

One's fate's the same as one's objective's fate—

When one seeks dead ones, call him "dead"—be straight!

One who is with them is a monk, and stone

And clod are his accomplices alone.

Stone and clod never waylay anyone,

But through this pair so much harm has been done.'

'Jihad is waged on him,' the bird then said,

'When such a waylayer awaits ahead.

A lionheart comes to the dangerous way

To help defend and drive the foes away.

A person's inner worth becomes well-known

Once he meets foes along his path alone.'

Mohammad was a swordsman prophet, so

485

490

495

His followers are valiant, as we know.
In our faith war can be the act that's proper—
In Jesus's, retreat to caves is better.
'If one has strength and aid,' the fowler said,
'Attacking evil is right, but instead
When strength is lacking, it's best to abstain.
Flee *what can't be endured** due to its strain.'
The bird said, 'What you need's sincerity—
You'll never lack friends then, assuredly.
Be such a friend and your friends will grow numerous,
But if you are without friends, you'll be helpless.'

500

Satan's a wolf; you're Joseph-like, good man.
Hold on tight to your father if you can!
The wolf will usually capture prey, it's clear
Whenever some stray lamb should wander near.
One shuns the Sunnah of community
Then dies alone where wild beasts wander free.
The path's your Sunnah, people your companions—
You'll fall without them in dire situations.

505

Not that companion who is wisdom's foe,
Who seeks to steal your clothes when you won't know:
To find a hidden place he comes with you
So he can rob you when you're out of view,
Or one who's prone to getting scared and then
Tells you that you should head back home again—
His scared heart frightens his companions—know
That fellow traveller is no friend, but foe.

510

The path to God is gambling all away.
Each thicket holds what drives frail souls away.
Faith's path is full of troubles that defeat
Any traveller whose nature's too effete.
Here souls are tested with all kinds of terror
As sieves are used for wheat: to make it finer.
What's the path like? Full of footprints, you'll find.
What is a comrade? Ladder for one's mind:
While being wary may keep wolves from you

515

Without friends you won't find the stupor too.
 One who goes happily on this path would be
 Travelling with others much more cheerfully.
 Even rough donkeys feel high with friends near
 And they get stronger like this, O fakir!
 Any donkey that ventures out alone
 Through tiredness finds the road is long. It's prone
 To lashes and to beatings it will bear
 Just to cross deserts on its own out there.
 'Don't go alone!' the donkey's warning you.
 'Unless you truly are a donkey too!'
 Whoever goes alone would doubtlessly
 Go with companions much more joyfully.
 And every Prophet on this path displayed
 Miracles by which comrades might be swayed.
 Were it not for supporting walls how could
 Houses and barns have been built that withstood
 High winds? And if gaps are between walls there
 How can the roof stay hanging in the air?
 There'd be no writing on the sheet, you'll find,
 If pens and ink had never once combined.
 If a mat's reeds weren't woven first together
 Then they would come apart in windy weather.
 Since God made things as pairs, please realize
 Coming together is what multiplies.

520

525

The fowler spoke; the bird spoke. Their debate
 Was fierce so it extended until late.
 Please make this *Masnavi* more loved and shorter—
 Abridge the narrative on this encounter.
 Next the bird asked, 'Whose is the wheat right there?'
 The fowler said, 'An orphan's, in my care.
 I've been entrusted with their property
 Since people think that I am trustworthy.'
 It said, 'I'm wretched and under compulsion:
 I'm even now allowed to feed off carrion.
 I'll eat this wheat of yours with your permission,
 O trusty, most respected and devout one.'

530

‘Since you now claim compulsion is insisting,
 If you eat this without need then you’re sinning.
 Abstention’s better even if you need it.

If you do eat, at least leave a deposit!’
 The bird then pondered this, but with great speed,
 Bursting forth from its reins, flew its wild steed.
 Once it had eaten there, still in the snare
 It read out *Ya Sin* and *An’am* in prayer.*

What use regretful sighs once you’re left helpless?
 That’s needed prior because it is now pointless.
 When greed and lust first stir then you must pray:

540

‘O You who come to pleas for help, we say
 Do it before destruction of this city
 And it might then avoid defeat and pity!’
Please cry for me now, weeper and sad mourner
Before they ruin Mosul and then Basra!
Before my death mourn for me and forgive,
Not after my death—do it while I live!
Before my death weep for me—dry your eyes
After the flood has passed of my demise!

Back when the devil was himself waylaying
 That’s when with *Ya Sin* you should have been praying.*
 Before the caravan should come to harm,
 O watchman, that’s when you should raise alarm.

545

*Story about that watchman who stayed silent while robbers carried off
 the entire stock of merchants, but afterwards made an uproar and acted
 like a watchman.*

A watchman slept when robbers came around,
 Stole all their goods and hid them underground.
 The caravan woke up when it was dawn
 And saw their camels and their goods had gone.
 They asked, ‘Guard, tell us what has happened here
 To make our goods and money disappear!’
 He answered, ‘Thieves came unexpectedly
 And took it all from me so rapidly.’

550

'You feeble thing!' the others started screaming
 What were you doing, you weak good-for-nothing?'
 He answered, 'I was all alone, while they
 Were numerous, armed and strong in every way.'
 One of them said, 'If you had given up
 Why not then shout for us to all get up?'
 He said, 'They showed their swords and knives that moment,
 And warned: "We'll kill you if you don't keep silent!"'
 I shut my mouth in fear then, but now I
 Holler, moan, shout for help and loudly cry.
 My breathing stopped so I could not speak then—
 Now I can scream the way you like again.'

555

The devil's robbed you of your life—why later
 Use the Qur'an to pray to your Creator?
 Though moaning now is wretched, it's not less
 Than something that's disastrous: heedlessness.
 Keep sobbing like this, even wretchedly:
 'O Mighty One, look at base ones like me!
 Whether it's late or not, the power's with You—
 God, when did anything escape from You?'
 He's King of '*Don't grieve what escaped you!*'* How
 Can what you seek evade His power somehow?

560

*The bird attributes its getting caught in the trap to the cunning and
 falseness of the ascetic. The ascetic answers the bird.*

The bird said, 'This is fitting for one who
 Heeds spells from the ascetics just like you.'
 'No, it fits greedy thieves,' that man then said,
 'Who slyly eat the orphan's share instead.'
 It started to lament then, which would make
 The trap and fowler feel its pain and shake:
 'My back has broken from my heart's contraction—
 Rub Your hand on my head, dear, with compassion!
 Under Your hand my head feels much relief.
 Your hand gives sweetness that's beyond belief.
 Don't take Your shade from my head that's so anxious,

565

For I am feeling absolutely restless.’

Sleep has got fed up with my eyes’ grief, You,
Envy of jasmine and of cypress too.

Though I’m unworthy, would You do a favour
And ask me now about the pain I suffer?

How was non-being worthy of Your grace
To open up the doors to such a place?

Your kindness touched the sick earth and it pressed
Ten pearls of sensory light within its breast,

Five outward ones, five inward, and these ten
Made lifeless semen into breathing men.

Without Your guidance what then is repentance
Other than mockery, O Light of transcendence?

You tear repentance’s moustache of honours—
That’s shadow, You’re the luminous moon that hovers.

By You my home and store were torn apart—
How can I not cry when You try my heart?

Since none lives without You, how can I flee?
Without Your Lordship there’s no slave—tell me!

O Source of Life, take my life since without You
I’m weary of my life and all that I do.

I am in love now with insanity,
Weary of culture and sagacity.

When shame’s veil’s rent I’ll then tell everyone.
Pain, self-restraint, and trembling still aren’t done?

As if a veil, I’m covered now in shame—
I’ll jump up from beneath it all the same.

Comrades, the paths are blocked now over here
By the Beloved, Fierce Lion—we’re the deer.

Content surrender is the sole solution
When gripped fast by a wild, bloodthirsty lion.

He has no food nor sleep just like the sun.

Without these He makes souls for everyone:
‘Come and be Me or with Me in your being

To see My face when I am self-revealing!
How did you get so frenzied without vision?

You were dust, now you seek revivification.’

570

575

580

585

If He's not fed you from beyond all space
Why has your soul's eye stayed fixed on that place?
Cats focus on the mouse hole, since they've been
Fed from that hole before that they have seen.
Another cat prowls on the roof, since there
It hunted birds that swooped down in the air.
One man's focus, as if for prayer, is weaving.
Another for his wages guards a building.
Another's jobless—Placelessness is where
He faces since You fed his soul from there.
Desire for God is the real work, so he
With that job leaves all others totally.
Other men are like children who all day,
Before our night departure, only play.
The sleepy one who leaps up once he wakes
Hears whispers from his nurse that are mistakes:
'Keep sleeping, dear, for I will not allow
Anyone to disturb your sleep somehow!'
But you should wake yourself from deepest slumber
Like thirsty men who hear the sound of water:
I'm water's sound in the ears of the thirsty,
Coming down from the sky like rain that's heavy.
Show you've been stirred, O lover, with a leap!
Water's sound's here, yet you stay sound asleep!

590

595

*Story about that lover who, in the hope of a tryst with his sweetheart,
came at night to the house she had indicated. He stayed waiting for part
of the night, but fell asleep afterwards. When his sweetheart came to
make the meeting, She found him asleep, so she filled his lap with walnuts
and left him sleeping there while returning home.*

Now listen to this tale that we have heard:

There was a lover once who kept his word.
For years he'd been checkmated trying to
Join his fair beauty for a rendezvous.
The seeker will find his goal in the end,
For joy is born of patience, my good friend.
One day his sweetheart said, 'Let's meet tonight
For I've cooked you some beans, which will delight.
Wait in that room till midnight patiently
Until I come there—no need to call me.'
In joy he gave food to the poor, since now
Good fortune's moon would rise from dust somehow.
Then he sat in that room in hope of meeting
His 'friend in the cave'* whom he had been seeking.
His sweetheart after midnight reached him there
True to her promise for their love affair.
She found her lover slumped, asleep, so she
Tore off part of his sleeve and carefully
Put a few walnuts on his lap to say:
'You are a child and love toys, so now play!'
The lover leapt up from his sleep at dawn
And saw the walnuts and his sleeve now torn.
He thought, 'Our ruler's faithful and she's true:
We cause our own fate through the things we do.'

600

605

O sleepless heart we're safe from this mistake
Like roof guards—rattles will keep them awake.
Our walnuts are all crushed inside this mill.
What we've said of our pain is too small still.
How long will you invite me to distraction?

610

O blamer, stop advising now this madman!
I don't want talk of separation's gain—
I've known that. How much longer with this pain?
On this path all things, crazy zeal apart,
Cause distance and keep lovers far apart.
Chain my legs if your aim is to restrain,
But I've cut one much harder: thinking's chain.
Bring hundreds here! I'll break them all except
My sweetheart's tress's chain—that must be kept.
Love and good reputation don't mix, brother!
Don't stay by reputation's door, a beggar!
It's time for me now to strip naked fully;
I'll set aside form and be spirit wholly.

615

Come, enemy of shame and overthinking!
I've ripped the veil of shame and bashful shrinking.
You who have blocked the soul from sleep, Beloved,
Through sorcery, and are so stony-hearted,
Grab self-restraint's throat, strangle it, O Rider,
So love's heart will become more joyful after!
How should His heart be happy till I burn?
My heart is His home and it's now its turn—
If You'd burn Your home down, do it since who
Will say to You '*You're not permitted to*'!
O Drunken Lion, burn this house away!

620

The lover's house is better in that way.
I'll make its fire a *qebila* for my yearning,
For I'm a candle lit up by His burning.
O father, forgo sleep just for tonight!

625

Among the sleepless spend a single night!
Look at those who've turned crazy—they've been slain
In union like the moths none can restrain.
Look at those drunk on love that fill a boat
And see changed to a dragon true love's throat!
Invisible, heart-ravishing, wild dragon,
A magnet which draws mountain-heavy reason.
Druggists' reasoning, once they first feel acquainted,
Drops their trays in the stream as if they've fainted.

630

Go, for you'll never leave their stream if you
 Fall in—'*None is like him*'*—God's words are true.
 Open your eyes, pretender, to see clearly!
 Stop saying, 'But I don't know this' so fearfully!
 Arise from plagues of falseness and privation!
 Enter eternal life's realm's transformation
 So 'I don't see' becomes 'I see so well'
 And 'I don't know' becomes 'I know' as well!
 Beyond drunkenness, be an intoxicator!
 From changing often to being constant later!
 How long pose drunkenly as if it's rare
 When drunks like you can be found everywhere?
 If the two worlds fill with the drunkards, it
 Would be all one, not wretched a small bit:
 Large numbers can't spoil it. Who is spoilt really?
 Hellfire's body worshippers are clearly.
 Though the whole world gets sunlight everywhere
 That fine flame's splendour won't seem wretched there,
 But rather rise up higher in its worth
 Because, as we've been told, '*it's God's vast earth.*'*
 This drunkenness may be a lofty flyer
 But on the Holy Ground there's something higher:
 Become Archangel Esrafil—bestow
 Spirit and drunkenness to all below!
 When thoughts preoccupy the drunk's heart, he
 Says, 'I know' and 'I don't know' constantly.
 But what is 'I don't know' for? It's to show
 Clearly to you The One Whom you don't know:
 Negating for affirming's sake, so quit
 Negating and begin affirming it!
 So leave behind 'It's not that; it's not this',
 Present The Single One who truly is!
 Stop your negating, worship the True Being!
 Father, learn from what that Turk has been doing!

635

640

645

*A drunken Turkish emir summons a minstrel at the time of the morning
 drink. Also the exegesis of the Prophet's saying: 'God has a wine He has*

*prepared for His friends—when they drink it they become intoxicated and
when they get intoxicated they are purified.’*

*The wine in the vat of mysteries is bubbling
So those who are stripped selfless can start drinking.*

*God said, ‘The righteous shall drink’.**

*The wine that you drink is forbidden wine
We only ever drink the lawful wine.
Strive to exist through Non-being, friend of mine,
And to get drunk with wine that is divine!*

*A Turk woke up hungover and so he
Wanted a singer there immediately.
Mystic singers close to the drunkards feed
Candy-like and give them the strength they need.
The singer made them drunk again—they tasted
Drunkenness from his breath, which wasn’t wasted.*

650

*The mystic brings the minstrel God’s wine, then
The minstrel’s other wine makes drunk all men—
Though both are called by one name, we all can
Tell them apart, like Hosayn and Hasan.*

*They may sound similar, but to you and I
A ‘tie’ is very different to the ‘sky’.*
Using the same word can fool everybody:*

*Muslims and infidels all have one body.
Bodies are pots with closed lids—look inside
To see what each pot might be trying to hide!
This one contains the Water of Life in it;
That one has deadly poison, so don’t drink it!*

655

*If you look at its contents, you’re a king,
If at the pot, you’re lost and wandering.
Compare then words with bodies, since their meaning
Is like the soul the latter are concealing.*

*Bodily eyes see bodies and that’s all,
But the heart’s eye perceives the artful soul.*

The Masnavi’s words waylay the form-seeker

660

*While those same words will guide the mystic-seeker.
Concerning the Qur’an, did not God say:*

'It guides some yet it still leads some astray.'*
 Lord, when the mystic should say 'wine', how could
 Something material then be understood?
 You only understand the devil's wine,
 So how can you perceive wine that's divine?
 Wine and the minstrel are accomplices:
 This leads to that one and that one to this.
 The hungover feed off his breath while singing;
 He leads them to the tavern they've been missing.
 One at one end, one at the opposite—
 The lover's like a polo ball being hit,
 The ear will follow what's inside the head—
 If yellow bile, it will turn black instead.
 And then the pair will fall unconscious when
 Parent and child become as one again.
 When joy and suffering made up, on that day
 The Turk woke the musicians up to play.
 The singer sang a poem sleepily:
*'Give me the cup, O You whom I don't see!
 You are my face—that's why I can't see You:
 Nearness is like a veil that covers You.
 You are my intellect beyond my vision
 For the amount of intricate confusion.
 You're "nearer to me than my jugular".*
 I should stop calling out as if I'm far,
 Except in deserts, where I just pretend
 To hide you jealously from others, Friend.'*

665

670

*A blind man enters the home of the Prophet Mohammad and Aisha flees
 from the blind man. The Prophet says, 'Why did you flee? He can't see
 you.' Aisha answers him.*

A blind man neared the Prophet long ago,
 Saying: 'You heat up ovenfuls of dough,
 And you're the lord of water, which I need,
 So help, cupbearer. This is what I plead!
 The blind man entered suddenly in there

675

So Aisha fetched her veil fast, once aware,
For that pure woman knew then how possessive
The Prophet was that she should be exclusive.
The lovelier one is the more it grows—

More beauty, more possessiveness, which shows.
Ugly hags know they're hideous, so instead

680

They give their husbands concubines to bed.
In the two worlds when has there been one handsome

Like our own Prophet. Glory be his ransom!
The two worlds both caress him, so it's clear

Why the sun gets so jealous when he's near,
Saying: 'I've cast my orb on Saturn, so

Pull back your faces, stars, to sidestep woe.
Be naughted in my peerlessly bright rays

Or else before them you'll be shamed always.
Every night, out of kindness, disappearing,

685

How can I leave? I just act like I'm leaving.
So for one night you fly like bats without me,
Flapping your wings while in the air below me,
And, like the peacock, give a wing display,
Becoming drunk and arrogant this way.

You don't look at your ugly feet which could,
Like Ayaz's old boots, do you much good.*

I show my face to scold you in my way,
So egotism won't lead you astray.

Let's leave this lengthy topic—pardon me—
The order 'Be!'^{*} forbids prolixity.

690

The Prophet Mohammad tests Aisha, saying: 'Why are you hiding? Don't hide, for the blind man cannot see you!' so it might show whether Aisha was acquainted with his mind or was just a follower of his outward instructions.

The Prophet tested Aisha then: 'Don't hide
For he can't even see you!' She replied
By signalling with her hands: 'He can't see,
But I can still see him quite perfectly.'

Reason's envy of spirit's loveliness

Means more allegories with which to dress—
And why does reason feel so jealous of it

When there is naught as hidden as the spirit?
Jealous one, whose eyes do you block from sight
Of Him Whose face is covered by The Light?
(This Sun shines without wearing masks at all—
Its only veil is excess light; that's all.)

695

From whom do you hide Him, O jealous one?

No trace of Him can be seen by our sun.
Envy is greater in my body—true:
It's all to hide Him from my own eyes too.

Due to my envy's fire, which is so fierce,
I am at war with my eyes and my ears.

O heart and soul, since you've such jealousy,
Shut your mouth and stop talking now to me!
'If I stay silent', reasoning will then say,
'I fear that sun will tear more veils away.'

700

By staying silent your speech gains much more;
Suppression makes desire more than before.
If the sea roars, then foam's produced at once—
Thus '*I loved to be known*'* brings turbulence.

You're shutting closed the window if you're speaking;
Expressing things in words is just concealing.

Sing like the nightingale when near the rose,
Distracting thus from its scent each one's nose,
So their attention's on '*Say!*'* in this place
And not instead fixed on the rose's face.
Before the brightly radiant sun, each guide
Is actually a waylayer inside.

705

*Story about that singer who started to sing this ghazal in the banquet of
that Turkish emir:*

'Are you a kind of flower or a moon?

What do you seek from my heart which must swoon?'

And how the Turk shouted: 'Tell about what you know!' And the answer of the singer to the emir.

Before that drunken Turk the singer started

To sing the secrets that *Alast* imparted:

'A moon or idol? It's not clear to see,

Nor do I know what you now want from me.

I don't know how to serve you, whether here

Silence is best or using words to steer.

How marvellous you're not separate somehow!

I don't know where I am or you are now.

I don't know how you pull me close to you,

In your embrace now, then in your blood too!'

He then began with 'I don't know' and made

A song with this 'I don't know' as they played.

'I don't know' grew excessive very soon

And our Turk friend grew weary of this tune.

He leapt up and then fetched a mace to hit

The awful singer on the head with it.

A colonel seized the mace before he could:

'To kill the singer now would not be good.'

'The endless repetition', that Turk said,

'Has pounded my being—I'll now pound his head!

Vile singer, if you don't know, don't talk shit!

If you do know, plan something that is fit!

Tell what you know, you giddy so-and-so!

And don't draw out "I don't know, I don't know"!

If I ask, "Where are you from?" you'll reply:

"Not from Balkh and not from Herat am I,

Nor Mosul, Baghdad, nor Teraz." I know

You'll drag it out so much with "Not" and "No."

Just say where you are from and then be free!

Elaborating here is idiocy.

If I ask, "Breakfast time what did you eat?"

You would respond, "Not wine and not grilled meat,

Nor broth, nor lentils, nor dried meat." I'd say:

"Just tell me what you did eat on this day!

What is this long palaver for?" 'My aim

Is quite obscure, so I can't give its name.

710

715

720

725

Until denial one's blocked from affirmation—
So you'd learn it I started with negation.
I'm singing for negation purposefully.
When you die, death reveals the mystery.'

*Exegesis of the Prophet Mohammad's saying: 'Die before you die!' Die
now before your actual death, my friend, To keep on living after your life
ends! and dwelled in heaven prior to me and you.*

You've stayed veiled though you've suffered agony
Since dying was the aim you couldn't see.
The agony won't finish till you die—

Without a ladder you can't reach the sky,
And when two rungs are missing we all know
Climbers can't reach the rooftop from below.

When the rope's short by the length of one ell
How can the bucket's water leave the well?
O prince, you won't sink your ship till you fit
The final load with its full weight in it.

That last load's like the morning star: it's key,
Wrecking the ship of doubt and misery.

Once it has sunk, the ship of consciousness
Becomes the sun in the sky over us.

Since you've not died your torment must go on,
Candle of Teraz,* die out by the dawn!

The sun of this world's hidden, as you know,
Until our stars have hidden their own glow.

Pound yourself, smash your ego while you're here—
Your bodily eye's just cotton in your ear.

You're pounding yourself really, you who're base.

Your ego's shown here in my actions' place:
Your own reflection's in my form and you

Rise up to fight yourself with things you do,
Just like that lion that fell down below

Thinking the well's reflection was its foe.*
No doubt, negation's being's opposite
And helps you learn a little part of it.

730

735

740

This is the sole way to show God since there
Is not one moment here without a snare.
But if you want to see unveiled, O mystic,
Choose death and tear the veil—become ecstatic!
Not that death which means burial out of sight,
But that death where you enter in a light.
When a man grows his childhood dies, you see.
Greeks shed their African hue gradually.
When gold is formed its previous state has gone;
When joy comes there's no place for sorrow's thorn.
'Mysterious seeker,' once the Prophet said,
'You want to see a corpse that isn't dead,
One walking like the living, though for them
Their souls are now in a much higher realm?
(His soul is in a higher place today,
So if he dies his soul's not moved away.
Before his death it had its relocation—
It's known through death, not reason's education.
Not vulgar souls' transitions, but transition
From one rank to a loftier position.)

745

750

Whoever wants to see on earth today
A dead man walking clearly in this way
Should look at Abu Bakr, pure and perfected,
Affirmer and prince of the resurrected.
Watch Abu Bakr now among creation
Then you will understand the Resurrection.'
Mohammad was a hundred of them—he
Became effaced to all that's temporary.
He was born twice here with all his perfections:
In one man see a hundred Resurrections!
They asked him once: 'O Resurrection, when
Will we see Resurrection for all men?'
Then mystically he'd answer with this question:
'Ask Resurrection when's the Resurrection—
Who would do that? The Prophet helpfully
Said, '*Die before you die!*' symbolically:
'As I have died before death and brought down

755

760

From up above this fame and this renown,
You'll see the Resurrection—if you can
Become one too yourself—strive hard, good man!
Until becoming it, you'll have no clue;
It's like this with the light and darkness too.
Become first wisdom to know it completely
Become love so you'll know love's flame so easily.
I would have shown this claim's proof here, my friend,
But there's no one who's fit to comprehend:
I've many figs, all made available
If a fig-eating guest should come at all.

765

All men and women universally
Each moment are in dying's agony.
Regard their counsel as the final one
A father might give to his precious son,
So care and mercy grows and tears away
Hatred and envy from all hearts today.
Look with that aim at your own family,
So your heart also feels some sympathy –
'*All that is coming comes*', so you be wise:
Deem your friends to be suffering in demise.

770

If selfish motives veil your sight, it's best
To cast away such motives from your breast.
And if you can't, don't stand there looking lifeless—
Each man has something making him so helpless.
Helplessness is a chain He put on you—
Open your eyes! He's the One you must view.
Therefore beg: 'Guide of life, I was then free,
But now I'm bound. Why is this? Please help me!
Have I stepped firmly into evildoing?
Due to Your wrath am I continually losing?
Have I been deaf to Your advice before
And claimed to smash the idols, but made more?
Your craftsmanship or death? Which must one know?
Death is like autumn, You're the leaves' source though.'

775

This death has banged the drum for many years,

But only when it's late you perk your ears.
'Alas, death!' one will cry when on the brink—
Has death made you at last begin to think?
Death's throat's grown hoarse from yelling. Its drum's skin
Has torn due to the banging for the din.
You've got embroiled in details that are small
And learnt just now death's secret after all.

780

*Comparison of the heedless man who wastes his life then starts to repent
and beg forgiveness when desperate at the time of death with the
mourning of Aleppo's Shi'ites every year during Ashura at the Antioch
Gate, and how a foreign poet arrived there on a journey and asked,
'What is all this wailing and mourning about?'*

The people of Aleppo stay up late
When it's Ashura at the Antioch Gate.
A huge crowd gathers there to constantly
Mourn the deaths of the Prophet's family.
The Shi'ites wail and mourn there and they weep
For Kerbala's cruel horrors. They will keep
Recounting suffering and iniquity
Yazid and Shemr* brought on that family.
Their shouts are mixed with cries of utter woe.
The place soon fills with them as huge crowds grow.
A traveling foreign poet once passed by
On Ashura and heard loud wails nearby.
He left the city centre to seek out
The clamour's source and learn what it's about.
While searching he asked questions everywhere:
'Why all this grief? Who are they mourning there?
Was it a leader who has passed away?
It can't be trivial for such crowds today.
Tell me his name and titles since I'm new
To here and not a citizen like you.
What was his job? What was he like? Tell me,
So based on that I'll write an elegy.
I am a poet with great compositions

785

790

And I can earn some food and more provisions.’
Someone said to him, ‘How mad! Don’t you know?
You’re not a Shi’ite. You’re that family’s foe.
Ashura is our own commemoration
Of one who was more than a generation.
This grief’s not trivial to believers here—
Love for the ear-ring shows love for the ear.
Believers feel that mourning his pure blood
Is greater many times than Noah’s flood.’

795

The poet’s profound criticism of Aleppo’s Shi’ites.

The poet said, ‘But when was Yazid’s rule
When all this happened which was clearly cruel?
The blind have seen already what occurred
And even deaf men’s ears have also heard—
Have you been sleeping until now that you
In mourning rip your clothes the way you do?
Sleepers, mourn for yourselves, since sleep like this
Is a most awful death. It surely is.
A royal soul escaped this gaol, so why
Rip up your garments, gnaw your hands and cry?
They were the monarchs of the faith, so when
They broke free it was jubilation then.
They rushed towards the palace gates, then shed
Their chains and fetters as they soared ahead.
It is the day of majesty if you
Know who they are with just a tiny clue.
Weep for yourself instead if you don’t know,
Since you deny flight from this world below.
Mourn your false heart and faith, which has no worth,
Since it sees nothing but this worn out earth.
Why isn’t it brave if it sees what’s true?
Why not content and sacrificing too?
And why no joy for faith’s wine on your face?
If you have seen the ocean, why no trace?
You wouldn’t deny water once you see

800

805

810

The stream, and seas and clouds especially.’

Comparison of the covetous man who does not see God’s provisions, his treasuries and mercy with an ant which struggles with a grain of wheat on a huge threshing floor and gets agitated, shakes and drags it hurriedly while not seeing the hugeness of the pile of wheat there.

The ant trembles for just one grain, since it
Is blind to all the massive piles of it.
It drags the grain with fear and greed from there
Yet can’t see piles of wheat are everywhere.
The owner says, ‘You who see something worthless,
Due to your blindness, as being something precious,
Is that all you see on my threshing floor
To covet just that grain and nothing more?’
You who’re a mote compared with Saturn and
A lame ant next to Solomon, understand:
You aren’t body—vision is your role.
You’ll be rid of it once you see the soul.
Man is his eye, the rest is flesh and skin—
He is what he sees; that’s the state he’s in.

815

A jar of water can submerge a mountain
If it’s connected to the massive ocean.
When the jar’s soul has a route to the Sea
It overwhelms the Oxus easily.
And that is how the words the Prophet said
Were really uttered by The Sea instead.
His words were ocean pearls essentially
Since his heart had an opening to The Sea.
Gifts from The Sea come through our jar, so it
Is not strange if in one fish whole seas fit.
The sensory eye sees places as being temporal
While mystics see those places as eternal.
Dualism’s how the cross-eyed people see,
But first and last are the same actually.
What shows this? Resurrection does no less—

820

825

Seek Resurrection and debate it less.
The precondition is to die before,
And Resurrection makes one live once more.
The whole world's taken the wrong path—for instance,
Though it's the refuge they fear Non-existence.
Where to seek knowledge? Knowledge you must quit.
And peace? Renouncing peace with self. That's it.
Existence? From renouncing your existence.
And apples? Giving up your hand's insistence.

O Best of Helpers, You make eyes that view
Non-beings as being Real Existents too.
The eye that was produced from non-existence
Saw as just non-existent Being's Essence,
But if that eye goes through a transformation
The world is Resurrection's own location.
These truths are not shared fully; some are hidden
Since for the undeveloped they're forbidden.
Though God is kind, heaven's delight as well
Remains forbidden for those meant for hell.

Heaven's honey tastes bad to those unfaithful
To Mankind's covenant that is eternal.
If there's no buyer when you want to sell
How can your hands keep busy then as well?
Looking is not the same as a transaction;
The idiot's looking is for a distraction:
He asks, 'How much is this?' not to find out,
But to kill time—he's messing you about.

It's out of boredom that he asks to see
That item. He won't buy it ultimately.
He looks at it a hundred times with care,
Yet gives it back—what was he measuring? Air?
How different is the buyer's bargaining
To some cheap joker's pointless frolicking.
He doesn't have one penny, so how can
He seek a coat except as jest, good man?
He has no wealth to trade with—there's no difference
Between a shadow and this wretch, for instance.

830

835

840

Real gold is this world's market's currency—

Beyond it's love and weeping tearfully.

He who went to the shop without a penny—

His life passed fast, but he did not gain any:

'Brother, where have you been?' 'Nowhere!' he'll say.

'What have you cooked to eat?' 'No soup today!'

Become a buyer, so my hands aren't stagnant—

Rubies will come forth from my mine that's pregnant.

Although the buyer's weak and tepid now,

Call him to the true faith now anyhow!

Release the falcon to catch the soul's dove!

Invite to God! Trail Noah's path above!

Do service for your Maker's sake and then

Who cares about rejection from mere men!

845

850

Story about a person who banged the drums at midnight for the pre-fasting meal at the gates of a palace. A neighbour said to him, 'It's midnight, not dawn, and no one is at this palace anyway. Who are you banging for?' The minstrel replies to him.

Someone once banged the dawn drum at the gate

Belonging to a rich man's vast estate.

He banged his drum at midnight. Someone said:

'You who are hoping to be given aid,

Do this at dawn instead is my advice—

Making a din at midnight isn't nice.

Then, selfish man, find out from the outside

Whether there's somebody still there inside!

Only demons and fairies are here now—

Why do you waste your time still anyhow?

Do you now beat your drum for someone's ear?

Where's the intelligence to make that clear?'

He said, 'You've spoken—now hear my reply

So you won't stay upset and wonder why.

To you it is the middle of the night,

But it's for me close to dawn of delight.

Every defeat to me is victory;

855

All nights are days to my eyes similarly.
 To you the Nile means blood, but in my view 860
 It's water, not blood, O great man.* To you
 It might be iron and hard marble though
 David felt it was wax-like, as you know.*
 The mountain's lifeless rock to you below—
 To David it's a maestro singer though.*
 To you mere gravel's something that can't speak,
 But it would grovel to the Prophet, meek.*
 The mosque's old pillar's dead to men like you—
 It loved the Prophet so much and he knew.*
 All the world's atoms may seem like they're dead 865
 To you, but God knows they are wise instead.
 Now to your words: "There's no one here—why bother
 To bang your drums still and make such a clamour?"
 For God's sake people give gold and donations,
 And open mosques and charity foundations—
 They risk their lives and all their property
 To do the Hajj like lovers, drunkenly:
 "The house is empty!" is not what men say—
 They know its Lord can't be seen anyway.
 The one whom God's illumined can still see 870
 That His home's filled with Him continually.
 To eyes which see the outcome there are plenty
 Of palaces filled with large crowds but empty.
 Seek in the Kaaba that one you pursue
 So He'll appear at once in front of you!
 How can the form that's noble and sublime
 Be absent from God's house at any time?
 He is there always and can't be kept out—
 Others, through neediness, must seek Him out.
 "*We're at Your service!*"* do they ever cry 875
 Without receiving a reply? Then, why?
 What drew out "*At Your service!*"* is the call
 From That One as the answer to them all.
 I sense this palace holds the spirit's banquet,
 That its dust's alchemy and I will thank it
 Once I have struck my copper at this place,

Forever more in treble and in bass.
For banging the dawn's meal's tune, which I play,
Oceans might scatter pearls as gifts my way.'

Men risk their lives for God with all at stake
By fighting battles purely for His sake.
Someone like Job faced such harsh trials and grief;
Jacob-like some stayed patient for relief.
A million sad and thirsty people favour
To strive so very hard and with much savour.
I bang my drum for the Forgiving God
At dawn at this gate—you see, it's not odd.

Heart, do you want a customer who'll pay
You handsomely? Then choose God every day!

He'll buy from you a dirty, ragged sack
And Inner Light is what He'll then give back.
He takes the transient body that is melting
And gives a kingdom far beyond imagining.

He takes a few tears and then gives you Kawsar,*
Which is so sweet it's envied by pure sugar.

He takes a heated, sad sigh and bestows
A hundred honours for each, heaven knows.

He's called that sigh that even makes clouds cry
Through its own breath the name 'Abraham's sigh'.*

Sell old things in this market that's so hot

And take the cash as it will be a lot!
And if you have doubts and feel too unsure,
Rely on Prophets' wares and feel secure!

The King increased by so much all their fortunes
Their property now weighs too much for mountains.

880

885

890

The story of Belaal's saying 'One! One!' in the heat of the Hejaz out of love for the Prophet on the morning when his master, due to his fanatical unbelief, would flog him with a thorny branch under the Hejaz's sun—blood would gush out of the wounds on Belaal's body and 'One! One' also burst out of him without his volition. Moans just burst out of those in pain without their intending them. Since he was filled with the pain of

love, there was no room for concern about preventing the pain from the thorns. This was like the case of Pharaoh's magicians, Jerjis and innumerable others.

Belaal's body became a scourge's victim—

With one his master flogged him to chastise him:

‘Why now recall Mohammad with devotion,

Bad slave with your denial of my religion?’

He flogged him with its thorns in the hot sun

While he kept praising God by saying ‘*One!*’

Until his word eventually reached the ear

Of Abu Bakr who was very near.

Eyes brimming with tears and his heart vexed too,

He sensed a scent from that ‘*One!*’ which he knew.

Then he advised Belaal more privately:

‘Hide your faith from deniers more prudently!

God knows your secret, so it's fine to hide.’

‘Prince, I repent before you!’ he replied.

Abu Bakr then at dawn of the next day

Had work that led him to pass by that way.

He heard ‘*One!*’ and blows from the thorns once more—

Flames started blazing in his own heart's core.

Again he counselled him and he repented,

But love consumed that after he'd relented.

There was so much repenting of this nature

That he got weary of it all much later,

Then said it openly and faced the sentence,

Saying, ‘Mohammad, enemy of repentance,

My veins and body are so filled with you

How can repentance fit inside it too?

I'll drive repentance from my heart's own core.

I won't repent of life forevermore.’

I've been subdued, for love is now my conqueror,

And through its bitterness I've turned to sugar.

O strong wind, I'm a straw that you will blow—

Where I'll eventually fall how can I know.

Whether I'm a thin crescent moon or one

895

900

905

Stout like Belaal, I'll follow your bright sun.
What has the moon to do with fatness, fellow?
She will pursue the sun just like a shadow.
Whoever makes a deal with destiny
Is mocking his own moustache foolishly.
A straw and wind make a negotiation?
Resolve to act when it's the Resurrection?
I'm like a cat inside a bag through love—
One moment I'm low down then high above.
He's whirling me around His head—I've no
Rest up above me and none down below.

910

Lovers have fallen in a flash flood here;
They've set their hearts on love's decree, it's clear.
Like millstones turning day and night, they'll be
Moaning and turning round quite helplessly.
Their turning's proof for seekers of The River—
None can say that It's still and won't deliver.
If you don't see The Hidden River, learn
By watching heavenly water wheels now turn!
The heavens have no rest from Him, so you,
O heart, just like the stars, do not rest too!
How should He let you hold a branch for aid?
He breaks all the attachments that you've made.
If you don't see the wheel of fate revolving,
Look in the elements for fervent whirling!
The straw and foam's apparent whirling motion
Is from the tumult in the noble ocean.
Hear the wind howl at His command and see
The ocean's waves surge high obediently!
The sun and moon are two mill oxen—they
Circle and keep watch through the night and day.
Stars run from house to house and what they bring
Is good and bad luck meant for everything.
Though stars of heaven may be far away,
Your senses weak and lazy too today,
But where are eyes, ears, and your wits at night
And then once you awake at dawn's first light?

915

920

925

Sometimes they're with good luck and jubilation,
Other times with bad luck and separation.

Heaven's moon is in orbit, which is why

At times she's bright, at times dark in the sky.

Sometimes it's milk and honey or fine summer,

Sometimes, with snow and frost, a place of torture.

All things before Him are like balls to hit—

Before His bat they bow down and submit.

Heart, you are one of numerous things—tell me

Why aren't you flailing due to His decree!

Be like a steed: awaiting the command,

Sometimes in stables, then out on the land.

When He should tether you remain right there!

When He unties you jump then everywhere!

When the sun jumps away then it will face

Being eclipsed by Him for this disgrace.

He says: 'Take heed! Beware so you will not

Become disgraced just like a blackened pot!'

The cloud receives fire lashes too, to say:

'Go this way and do not now go that way!

Rain on this valley, not back over there!'

He scolds it: 'Listen!' so that it takes care,

'Your intellect's not greater than the sun—

Don't hold a thought that's a forbidden one!

O intellect, don't crookedly now pace

Lest there is an eclipse of your own face,

But when your sin is less you will gain sight

Of half the sun eclipsed, half shining bright.

Punishment fitting sins is what I practise.

This is the basis of revenge and justice.

I hear and see all things, good or bad, open

For all to look at or completely hidden.'

The New Year's come, so leave this theme till later!

Creatures' mouths have been sweetened by their Maker.

Spiritual water's come back to our stream;

Our King's returned to our lane like a dream.

Fortune is strutting, coat tails trailing it—

930

935

940

945

It says it's time to break vows and to quit.
 The flood has swept repentance clean away.
 The guard is sleeping—it's the chance today.
 Every drunkard has got drunk, come what may;
 Tonight I'll gamble all we have away.
 That soul-expanding spirit's ruby wine
 Has made us rubies also, friends of mine.
 That heart-expanding gathering thrives—arise!
 Burn incense to ward off all evil eyes!
 I now can hear the happy drunkards roar—
 I need it this way, soul, forevermore.
 A moon's befriended great Belaal and now
 The thorns' blows are a rosegarden somehow.
 'Though thorns make me look like a sieve,' he said,
 'Body and soul are joy's rosebush instead.
 My body's dealt blows by the scourge's lashing,
 But my soul's drunk, effaced in God, Who's loving.
 That Soul's scent reaches my soul powerfully;
 The scent of my Kind Friend is reaching me.'
 Once back from his ascension, our dear Prophet
 Then said, 'Belaal, *To me you are exquisite.*'
 Once Abu Bakr heard about this, then
 He never asked him to repent again.

950

955

Abu Bakr recalls the incident with Belaal regarding his oppression at the hands of the Jews, his repeating 'One! One!' and the increase in the Jews' hatred of him, and he recounts that story to Mohammad and asks his advice about buying Belaal.

Abu Bakr told Mohammad later on
 Of loyal Belaal's state: 'That blessed winged one
 Who measures heaven as he darts above
 Is now in love, ensnared by your famed love.
 That falcon though receives from owls much pressure
 So inside filthy shit lives this great treasure.
 The owls are being so malevolent
 They're tearing off wings of the innocent.

960

His only crime is having falconness—

What was Joseph's other than handsomeness?

Those owls come from the ruins—that is why

They rage at falcons and love to deny:

“Why keep recalling life in that realm yonder

In palaces, on forearms of the ruler?

You're rude to the owls' village in this way—

Do you want to cause trouble here today?

The heavens envy our home—how can you

Call it a wretched ruin as you do?

Do you now use deceit so our owls choose

You as their king and leader through this ruse?

You're putting fancies in their heads anew

And calling paradise “a ruin” too.

We'll hit you on the head so hard you'll not

Try anymore your trickery and sly plot.”

They're crucifying great Belaal as he

Faces East, with a thorny branch. I see

Blood gushing out of many wounds. He says

“One!” and bows his head in pure Muslim ways.

I counselled him, “Keep your faith hidden, please—

Hide well your secret from cursed enemies!”

He's a lover—for him it's Resurrection;

Repentance for him therefore is no option.'

Love with repentance and some patience still?

That is absurd, dear, and impossible.

Penance is just a worm, while love's a dragon;

The former's men's, the latter God's possession.

Love is God's attribute. He lacks for nothing.

It's not real to become in love with something,

Since that thing's just gold plate on the outside—

It looks bright, but is smoke-filled still inside.

When brightness fades and smoke inside is clear

That moment you'll see love freeze when it's near.

The beauty goes back to its source and then

The body's left disgraced and foul again.

Moonlight returns back to the moon at last

965

970

975

980

Back from the plain wall where it had been cast.
The beauty therefore leaves the body's clay
And moonlight's beauty leaves the wall by day.
Gold leaves the surface of a false coin's face
And goes back to the mine, its starting place—
Just like smoke, copper is then left in view;
Its lover blushes, so embarrassed too.
The visionaries' love's fixed on The Mine
And so it grows each day and won't decline.
There is no equal to the mine for gold,
O Goldmine whom none can doubt once they're told.
If someone treats false coin as gold no less,
Real gold goes to its mine in Placelessness,
Lover, beloved left in agony
Like fish when their pond's dried up suddenly.
Love that's divine is the sun of perfection:
Its light is His Command, shadows creation.

985

Mohammad's joy would grow at what he'd say;
Abu Bakr's wish to speak grew too this way—
Mohammad was his audience, so each hair
Of his became a separate tongue right there.
Mohammad asked, 'Now what's the remedy?'
He answered, 'I will buy and set him free.
Whatever price the owner sets I'll pay;
I'll disregard the cost to me today.
Since he's *God's captive on earth* and I know
He's subject to the anger of *God's foe*.'

990

The Prophet convinces Abu Bakr, saying: 'Since you are going to buy Belaal, they will certainly raise his price with wrangling over it—make me your partner in this good act, be my agent and receive half the price!'

Mohammad then said, 'Seeker of love's bliss,
I will be your accomplice in all this.
As agent you buy a half-share for me
And you can take from me the total fee.'
He answered, 'At your service!' then departed

995

To see the owner who was so cruel-hearted.
He thought, 'From children one can easily buy
Precious pearls, which nobody can deny.'
The devil buys both faith and wisdom here
With wealth from these dumb children. It's so clear.
He decorates the corpse so well that he
Buys with it many rosegardens you see.
By magic he makes moonlight shine below
Then steals the purses of the vile and low.
The Prophets taught them how to trade and lit
Faith's candle right before them as is fit.
The sorcerer devil caused the Prophets to
Appear so ugly in their damaged view.
The foe shows ugliness by sorcery
So couples will divorce immediately.
The sorcery has stitched up both their eyes
So they sell cheaply pearls that others prize.
The pearl's superior to both worlds, so hurry
And buy it from a dumb child who's a donkey.
To donkeys every pearl's the same, and we
Witness it doubt the pearls and their great sea:
One can't expect a beast to seek pearls out—
It disbelieves in them and opts to doubt.

1000

1005

God hasn't put in animals devotion
To rubies or to pearls found in the ocean.
Have you seen donkeys with fine earrings, fellow?
The donkey's ear and mind are on the meadow.
The Fig says: '*Best of statures*'* for the spirit
Is a fine jewel, friend, that is exquisite.
*The best of statures** is beyond God's Throne
And it is far beyond all thought that's known.
If I divulge the price of this rare thing
I'll be consumed and all who're listening!
Close your lips here—don't drive your donkey farther!
Abu Bakr sought those donkeys on this matter:
He knocked—they opened up their door and then
Beside himself he went among vile men

1010

And sat down in a fury. Then he said

Many harsh words that came into his head:
 ‘Why beat this Friend of God, foe of The Light?
 What hatred is this that’s seen in plain sight?
 If you’re true to your own faith, then how can
 Your heart oppress so cruelly a true man?
 You who are in your Jewish faith so soft
 Have thought a prince the same as you and scoffed.
 Don’t view through your distorted mirror, you
 Who’re banned with everlasting curses too!’

If I tell what came from his mouth complete
 And unabridged, you’d lose your hands and feet.
 Those *springs of wisdom* streamed out aimed at them
 Like a Euphrates from the other realm.
 Or that rock from which water gushed—inside
 It had no source of water, nor outside.
 God turned that rock into His shield that day
 Opening celestial water in that way,
 Just as He has made light continually flowing
 From your eyes’ founts without it ever slowing—
 Eyeball and retina don’t have this substance—
 God made them serve as veils to keep a distance.
 The air inside the openings of your ears
 Will hear, whether it’s truth or lies it hears.
 What are that air and that small bone receiving?
 The sounds of words the story-teller’s reading.
 That air’s a veil and so is that small bone—
 There’s none in the two worlds but God alone.
 He is the listener and the speaker also
 Since *ears belong to heads*, deserving fellow.

The owner said, ‘If you feel pity, then
 Buy him with gold, most generous of men!
 Buy him since your heart burns for your own friend—
 Your problem won’t be solved until you spend.’
 He answered, ‘I’d serve God and pray much too!
 I have a slave who’s a white Jew like you.

His heart is black although his body's white—

Take him and give the black man full of light!’

He sent a man to fetch that slave who truly

Was someone with much handsomeness and beauty,

So much it stunned the stubborn Jewish owner—

1035

His stony heart could keep control no longer.

Form-worshippers will all act the same way—

Form turns their stone to wax then straight away.

But that Jew haggled more, not satisfied:

‘You have to give more than this,’ he replied.

Abu Bakr then increased his bid with silver

To satisfy his greed, which had grown bigger.

The Jew laughs and reckons Abu Bakr Seddiq has been cheated in the deal.

The stony-hearted Jew just laughed aloud,

With mockery and malice, feeling proud.

Abu Bakr said, ‘What is this laughter for?’

1040

Then in response the wretch laughed even more

And said, ‘If you’d not been so keen to buy

The black slave now, though it’s a wonder why,

I’d not have haggled so aggressively,

But sold him for a fraction readily.

He isn’t worth a penny in my view—

You raised his price with your hullabaloo.’

Abu Bakr said, ‘You are the fool here clearly—

You’ve traded a rare pearl for walnuts merely.

He’s worth the two worlds in my own opinion—

1045

I look at his pure soul, not his complexion.

He’s red gold blackened by the jealousy

In this abode of total idiocy.

Eyes viewing bodily colours cannot see

Beyond the veil to souls’ depths tragically.

If you had haggled more when trying to sell

I’d have brought wealth and property as well,

And if you’d raised the price more, in distress

I would have borrowed loads of gold, no less!
 You gave him while assuming he's not worth it; 1050
 Not seeing pearls, you didn't split the casket.
 You gave me a locked casket—you'll soon see,
 You fool, you have been swindled massively.
 You gave a ruby-filled jewel box away.
 Like Africans, you love being black today.
 In the end you'll repeat, "O woe is me!"
 Who sells their fortune and felicity?
 Fortune came in a slave's garb to your presence—
 Unfortunate eyes saw only his appearance.
 He showed you plainly his own slavery. 1055
 Your ugly nature showed false trickery.
 O driveller, take as idol this one here
 Who's white but has dark secrets that aren't clear!
 We've won! That one for me, this one for you.
 Beware! *You have your faith, I have mine,* Jew!*
 Idolaters deserve this: draped in satin
 Their horse is not alive at all, but wooden,
 Like tombs of infidels with smoke inside
 Although they're so ornate on the outside;
 Like tyrants' wealth, which can look so impressive, 1060
 Though it is filled with blood from being oppressive;
 Like hypocrites who do the fast and prayer—
 Inside is barren soil with no crops there;
 Like a cloud full of thunder with no rain—
 Naught comes from it for soil and crops to gain;
 Just like false promises and lies—disgrace
 The outcome, though adored in the first place.
 Abu Bakr took Belaal then by the hand—
 From beatings he was stick-like when he'd stand.
 A toothpick found a mouth that it could meet 1065
 And hurried to the man whose words were sweet.
 That wounded one then saw Mohammad's face
 And fainted on his back right at that place.
 He stayed a while then in unconsciousness—
 On waking he wept tears of happiness.

Mohammad hugged him—how can other men
Know of the blessings that reached him right then,
Like copper after alchemy or beggars
Who stumble across lots of priceless treasures?
A dried-up fish by chance fell in the sea
Lost caravans found where they're meant to be.
If what the Prophet said should reach the night
Then it would stop from actually being night:
It would become as bright as dawn instead—
I can't convey the meanings in my head.

1070

You know well Aries' sun's communication
To the date palm and other vegetation,
And also what pure water will convey
To basil leaves and saplings each spring day.
God's work with the whole world in every part
Is like the spells of the spell givers' art.
God's pull says hundreds of things secretly
Without words, lips, cause or effect you see.
It's not that God's decree has no effect
But just that it's beyond the intellect.
Intellect learned the principles by rote—
The same for secondary things. Take note!
If intellect asks which way he should try,
Say: 'In a way you don't know, so goodbye!'

1075

*Mohammad's reproach to Abu Bakr Seddiq: 'I advised you to buy in
partnership with me, so why did you make the purchase on your own?'
and the latter's excuse.*

The Prophet said, 'Seddiq, did I not ask
To make me your accomplice in this task?'
'We are two slaves in your street,' he replied,
'I freed him for Your sake. That's why I tried.
Keep me your slave and cave companion too!'
I don't want any freedom now from you.
Since I was freed from this fine slavery
To you, I've just faced pain and misery.

1080

You have revived the world by being chosen.

You've made me special, though I'm an unknown one.

In youth my soul would dream so vividly

1085

That the sun's orb would say "Salaam!" to me

And lift me up to heaven—lifted high,

I'd be its fellow-traveller in the sky.

I'd think, "Impossible hallucination!"

Does something so impossible still happen?

I saw myself the moment I saw you—

Bravo to the path's mirror with good view!

Once I saw you impossible turned real.

My soul drowned in your glory—I could feel

No more love for the sun above us too

1090

The moment, soul of this realm, I saw you.

From you my eyes gained a high aspiration

And looked at mere land just with indignation.

I sought light, then the light of light reached me;

I sought the houris, then saw what they see

With envy; I saw handsome Joseph too,

Then saw a realm of Josephs inside you.

I looked for paradise, then to my heart

A paradise lay in your every part.

I think what I say now is praise that's true—

1095

It is a silly satire though to you.'

It's like that shepherd's praise of God before

Near Moses, who could not take any more:

'I'll give you milk and hunt the lice on you.

I'll stitch your boots so they are just like new'—

God took his laughable words as his praise—*

If you take pity, it's from Godly ways.

Take pity on our failing comprehension,

You who're beyond brains and each one's conception!

O lovers, now good fortune reaches you

1100

From that old realm that can make all things new,

From that world seeking cures for those without—

Millions of wonders are up there, no doubt.

People, rejoice, for here arrives relief!

Be happy as you see the end of grief!
A sun went in the new moon's home—its call
Was loud and clear: 'Refresh us all Belaal!'*
You'd whisper, fearing then your enemy—
Ascend the minaret, shout now you're free!

He gives the news to every sad one's ear:
'Arise and take good fortune's road from here!'
You who were jailed in filth and lice, now free,
Stay silent near those prone to jealousy!
But how can you stay silent now instead
When drummers rise from each hair on your head?
The jealous one is so deaf he will say:

'What sound of drums? I don't hear them today.'
Fresh basil sweeps his face, but he is blind
And moans, 'What's that annoyance that I mind?'
A houri grabs his hand and draws him near—

Distraught, he asks, 'Who seeks to hurt me here?'
Why am I being pulled in every way?
I was asleep. Let me nap! Go away!'

The one you dream of is right here, buffoon!
Open your eyes to the auspicious moon!
For dear ones, hardships always are much harder,
Since the Beloved flirts more with the lover.
He flirts with beauties everywhere, you'll find.
Sometimes he even will excite the blind.

He shows himself to them for a brief moment,
Exciting even the most firm opponent.

1105

1110

1115

Story about Helaal, who was a devoted servant of God. He had vision and did not merely imitate others. He had become concealed through being a servant to the creatures, for sound reasons not due to being helpless, the way that Logman, Joseph, and others were in appearance.*

He served as a groom to a prince who was a Muslim, but blind: 'The blind man knows he has a mother, but cannot conceive what she is like.' If with that knowledge he reveres that mother, it's possible he might become relieved of blindness, for, as the

Prophet Mohammad said: 'When God desires good for His slave He opens the eyes of his heart, to let him see the unseen world beyond with them.'

You've heard of the good aspects of Belaal—

Learn now about the story of Helaal,

Who was the more advanced of this fine pair

For slaying his self even more. That's rare.

Not like you: sliding further back each day—

From pearl you turn to a mere stone this way:

Like when a guest comes to a nobleman—

The latter asks of his past from that man:

'How old are you, my son? You can confide it

1120

In me, so count the years and don't you hide it!'

He says, 'Nineteen, eighteen, or seventeen,

O brother like a friend on whom I'm keen.'

The former says, 'Go with your giddy head

Back till you reach your mother's womb instead!'

Story expounding on this discourse.

A man asked for a horse from an emir.

He answered, 'You can take this grey one here.'

He said, 'I don't want that one.' 'What's the reason?'

'It's stubborn and goes backwards and it keeps on

Going back to its arse to no avail.'

1125

'Well, then direct towards your home its tail!'

Your self's steed's tail is lust as bad as ever—

That's why self-worshippers retreat forever.

Transformer, make his tail of lust instead

From its root yearn for that realm that's ahead!

If you deny his lust cake, it will raise

Its head instead in prudent wisdom's ways,

Like cutting off a tree's branch: strength was gained

By all the lucky branches that remained.

If you move that steed's tail in one direction

1130

And it retreats, it heads towards protection.

How good are horses that obey and keep

Moving forward without retreat or sleep.
Like Moses, it moves swiftly with much ease—
He viewed as small the gap between two seas.
The journey to love that he sets off on
Takes seven hundred years once he has gone.
His body's aspiration was exquisite—
Imagine then how high that of his spirit!
So far ahead the royal knights had spread
While noisy claimants were dumped out instead.

1135

Parable

It's like the caravan that came before
Into a town and found an open door.
One said, 'In this cold weather here today
Let's just unload here for a place to stay.'
A voice said, 'No, unload it all outside
And only after that's done come inside:
Drop everything outside that you can drop,
Not inside—it's a high class place to stop.'

Helaal, enlightened mystic master here
Was groom and servant for a good emir.
He worked as stable-groom, but all the same
He was a monarch, servant just in name.
About his worth the prince then had no clue—
His only vision was the devil's view,
Seeing just clay form, not the gold of course,
Five senses, six dimensions, not their source.
Clay's colour's seen, the light of faith concealed—
In this world prophets dealt with this and healed.
One saw a minaret, but no bird on it—
There was a falcon with diverse skills on it.
Another saw a bird's wings flapping there,
But didn't see that its beak held a hair.
The one *who sees by God's light** was aware
Of both the bird and, in its beak, the hair.
He said, 'Look at the hair! Until you see

1140

1145

Your knot will not be opened easily.’
The form was just clay in the first one’s vision;
The next saw knowledge inside it and action—
The body is the minaret, obeying
And knowledge are both shown by birds there staying:
The mystic sees the bird and naught besides,
Nothing in front or back or on the sides.
The hair is hidden light in which it’s basking
And which makes that bird’s spirit everlasting.
The bird whose beak has that hair inside it
Has nothing in it that is counterfeit.
Its knowledge flows from its soul constantly—
It has naught borrowed and just temporary.

1150

*How this Helaal got sick and his owner was unaware of his being sick
because he did not value him, and how the Prophet Mohammad learnt of
his sickness and poor condition, then went out to find him.*

Helaal became sick once all due to fate.
Mohammad learnt within of his poor state.
His owner had no clue about his sickness
Because to him his slave Helaal was worthless.
A good man lay for nine days over there
Inside the stable and none were aware.
The king of all great people whose own wisdom
Is oceanic, reaching every kingdom,
Received God’s revelation then, informing:
‘An ardent follower is ill and suffering.’
Mohammad went for noble Helaal’s sake
To visit him, whatever it would take.
The moon pursued the revelational sun
And, like the stars, trailed this companion:
‘For my companions are like stars,’ he said,
‘A guide for travellers, harm for foes instead.’

1155

1160

When the emir heard that the king reached there,
So overjoyed, he jumped up in the air,
Clapping his hands and thinking by mistake

That the great king had come there for his sake!

When he came down he wouldn't then refuse

1165

To throw his soul as gift for the great news.

He kissed the ground, greeted the Prophet while

His face beamed happily with a huge smile:

'Give honour to our home most generously

In God's name to make this place heavenly,

So it surpasses all the heavens too,

Saying: "I've seen this epoch's pole, have you?"

That noble one replied immediately:

'It isn't you that I've now come to see.'

He said, 'My soul's yours, but what's that to you—

1170

Please tell for whom you make the effort to,

So I can be dust under his feet's space,

For he grows in the orchard of your grace.'

Since he spoke in this way and banished pride

The Prophet stopped rebuke and just replied

By asking: 'Where's Helaal, he of The Throne?

Humble yet spread like moonbeams, he alone

A king disguised in slavery to the eye,

Who came down to the world so he could spy.

Don't say: "He is my slave and groom", but rather

1175

Perceive that in the ruins he's the treasure!

How is Helaal now feeling during sickness?

Thousands of moons are at his feet, you'll witness.'

His owner answered, 'I was not aware

That he was ill, for days no hide nor hair.

He stays with mules and camels—he's a groom.

The stable is where you can find his room.'

The Prophet Mohammad enters the stable to visit Helaal and soothe him.

The Prophet then went to the stable to

Visit Helaal, which he had come to do.

It was dark, foul and dirty over there,

1180

But when his friendship came who then would care?

That lion sensed the prophet's scent as well

As Jacob could distinguish Joseph's smell.*
Miracles aren't the cause of faith—one sees
The scent of likeness draws good qualities.
Miracles are for scaring foes; the scent
Of likeness wins hearts—for that it is meant.
Foes are subdued, not friends. How can friends be
Bound by the neck as if for slavery.

Helaal awoke due to his scent and wondered:

1185

'In here there's dung, but now a fine scent entered.'
Through the steeds' legs he peered and saw past them
The peerless Prophet's own fine, holy hem.
That hero then crept out of his own corner
And pressed his face down on his feet with ardour.
The Prophet then placed his face next to his
And planted on his cheek and eyes a kiss,
Saying: 'O Lord, a hidden pearl! Hey, stranger
From heaven, how are you? Now out of danger?'
Helaal said, 'How should one with bad sleep be
When sunshine enters in him suddenly?
Or one who thirsts, but eats clay every day
When water comes and carries him away?'

1190

Explanation of the Prophet's saying when he heard Jesus walked on water: 'If his certainty had increased, he would have walked on air.'

Like Jesus whom the river bore away:

'You're safe on Water of Life', it would say.
The Prophet said, 'With certainty much greater
Even the air would have been his safe bearer,
As when I rode on air for my ascension
On that night of divine communication.'*

'What is a dirty, blind dog,' Helaal said,
'That leaps awake as a great lion instead?
Not one that can be pierced by sword or spear,
But rather they would break apart in fear.
Or a blind man who slides like snakes and lies,

1195

Then finds spring orchards, opening his eyes?’
What is that ‘how’ that’s freed from ‘howness’ now
And reaches ‘Howlessness’ as well somehow?*

He will give ‘howness’ then from Placelessness.
‘How’s’ are around his food like dogs or less.
He gives a bone from ‘Howlessness’,* good man.

1200

Silence, unclean one! Don’t read the Qur’an
Until you clean yourself of ‘howness’,* then
You can touch that pure, holy book again.

O kings, whether unclean or dirty, what
Can I recite if I do not read that?

You’re telling me: ‘Until you’ve washed, don’t go
Into the clean bath water.’ You should know

There’s only lots of dirt outside it here—

No one gets clean without going in, that’s clear.
Maybe the waters lack the grace to be

1205

Receiving filth to clean continually?

Pity the hope of the most ardent lover—

How sad that he must have this grief forever.
Water has many graces, force as well,
As it takes up polluting things. Farewell!

O Light of God, Hosamoddin, the Light

Guards you from *evil of those that take flight*.
The Light and its ascent are your protection,

O Sun, who’s hidden from the bat’s detection.
What is the veil in front of the sun’s countenance

1210

Other than even more light and more radiance?
It must be just the Lord’s Light that veils there—

The bat and night time do not have a share.
Since they’ve stayed veiled and very separated

They are depressed and so humiliated.
You’ve told some of Helaal’s tale, that new moon,

So tell the full moon’s story to us soon!
The crescent and full moon have unity

Far from corruption and duality.
That crescent’s free from defect inwardly
Yet has the flaw of waxing outwardly.

1215

Night after night it gives a class on waxing,
And with deliberation it's relaxing.
It says, 'O immature one who is hasty,
One reaches the roof step by step and steadily,
So, like an expert, boil pots gradually—
The stew gets spoiled if boiled too rapidly.
If God had wanted to, immediately
He could have made creation by His 'Be!'*
So why did He take six days for that task,
Each day a thousand years, may I now ask?
Why does it take nine months for pregnancies?
Gradualness is one of His qualities.
Why forty mornings to make Adam's clay?
He gradually added more clay every day,
Not like you, immature and rushed forever—
You're still a child though you act like an elder.
Like marrows you have shot up above all,
But you've no roots of struggling hard at all;
Climbing up on the walls and trees instead,
You're like a pumpkin with your hairless head.
Though you climbed on a royal cypress tree,
You're still so dry and hollow finally.
O pumpkin, since you used rouge on your cheek
You have turned yellow and look sick and weak!

1220

1225

*Story of that old hag who would put make-up on her ugly face, but it
could never be made pleasing.*

There was a ninety-year-old ugly woman
Who looked so sick with a most pale complexion.
Her face was folded like a food cloth, yet
She still longed for a husband she might get.
She'd lost her teeth; her hair was white, not black.
Her senses had dimmed, she had a hunched back.
Her lusting for a husband was still there:
She longed to hunt, but had a broken snare
(Cock crowing at the wrong hour or a street

1230

That leads nowhere, or empty pot fools heat).
 Without legs or a horse she loved the fray;
 She loved flute music without flutes to play.
 May lust in dotage even spare the Jews!
 The one with such lust is a wretch who'll lose.
 A dog's teeth fall out in old age, then it
 Leaves human beings alone and just eats shit.
 But there are sixty-year-old curs who're different—
 Their canine teeth get sharper every instant.
 Those old dogs lose their hair as they get old,
 But these are satin-clad when it gets cold.
 See how their lust for gold and fornication
 Increases like the other's procreation.
 Such a life is from hell and for the butcher
 And his own slaughter house of wretched anger.
 People tell him, 'May you live long!' and he
 Opens his mouth with laughter merrily.
 He thinks a curse like that is prayer instead.
 His eyes stay closed; he doesn't lift his head.
 If he'd seen the next world or just a clue,
 He would have said, 'May life be short for you!'

1235

1240

Story about a dervish who blessed a man from Gilan, saying: 'May God bring you back in good health to your home!'

A beggar with a basket seeking food
 Prayed for a lord from Gilan who was good
 And gave him bread, 'O You Whose aid is sought,
 Take him home safely! Let that be his lot!'

'If it's the house I've seen,' that lord then said,
 'O wretch, may God take you there now instead!'

The base bring story-tellers down always
 His words may be sublime, but they've their ways.
 Because the tale depends on who is listening—
 The tailor cuts cloth for those at the fitting.

1245

Description of that old hag.

The gathering isn't free from critics, so
I have to keep the discourse level low.
Return to talk that was consigned before—
The tale about the old crone needs some more.
When someone grows old, but is still not real,
Call him an old crone and see how he'll feel!
He has no capital, nor a foundation,
And he can't get some for a transformation.
He neither gives joy, nor is he receiving.
He has no substance and he can't draw meaning,
Neither tongue, intellect, ear, nor sound vision,
Nor wisdom, witlessness, nor contemplation.
No neediness, nor flirts, nor handsomeness,
He's like an onion—layers of smelliness.
He hasn't followed the true path, nor can he.
He has no sighs, nor burning that we can see.

1250

1255

*Story about that dervish who, when he begged at a certain house for
something, was always told, 'None here!'*

A beggar went up to a house nearby
And asked for bread, fresh, stale, still moist, or dry.
The owner said, 'Bread here? Are you insane?
How can this be a bakery? Refrain!'
'At least find me some fat!' the beggar said.
'This is no butcher's shop. Go there instead!'
'Give me a little flour then, if you will!'
The owner said, 'Do you think it's a mill?'
The beggar said, 'Just water that's supplied.'
He answered, 'There's no stream or well this side.'
Whatever he would ask for longingly
The owner would just make a mockery.
The beggar entered, lifted up his shirt—
He wanted to shit there since he felt hurt.
'Shut up, wretch!' said the beggar in a fit,
'In this dump I am going to squat and shit.
One has to shit in houses like this one

1260

Since it does not have food for anyone.’

Since you’re no falcon to hunt for your prey,

1265

Trained for the king’s hunt in a personal way,

And you’re no peacock with designs on you

That eyes should light up when they get a view,

Nor parrot that, when sugar’s brought to eat,

Ears should bend to hear sweet words you repeat,

Nor nightingale to wail now desperately

Like lovers in the flower fields that we see,

Nor hoopoe to bring messages here swiftly,

Nor stork to settle somewhere very lofty,

What is your job and why do they buy you?

1270

What kind of bird? With what do they eat you?

Transcend this store of hagglers now! Climb higher

To Grace’s own store, where *God is the buyer*.*

The shabby goods that others have ignored

Have been bought by the Noble, Generous Lord.

No false coin is rejected over here—

His aim’s not to make profit and that’s clear.

Return to the story of the old hag.

Since that old woman wanted marriage, she

Would pluck her eyebrows very carefully

And use a make-up mirror to apply

1275

On cheeks and mouth the things that beautify.

She rubbed rouge on with joy repeatedly,

But all her wrinkles stayed there stubbornly.

This dirty crone tried sticking on her face

Some scraps from the Qur’an—what a disgrace!

She hoped to hide the wrinkles of a crone

And have a ring’s nice bezel clearly shown.

She stuck them on her face to no avail—

They all fell off when she put on her veil.

She’d pick each scrap up and try sticking it

1280

Back on her face by using just some spit,

But when she wore her veil again, she found

That all these scraps fell quickly on the ground.
Despite her efforts they fell down once more—
‘Curses be on the devil!’ she then swore.
Satan took form before her suddenly:
‘O shrivelled, brazen harlot cursing me,
In all my life I’ve never thought I’d witness
A harlot even think she might attempt this.
You have now sown a rare seed of disgrace
And not left one Qur’an here still in place.
You are a hundred Satans, score by score—
You nasty hag, I can’t take any more!’

1285

How long will you steal wisdom from That Book
To give your face a rosy apple look?
How long will you steal words that God’s men say
To sell and win the people’s praise this way?
Mere daubed-on colour doesn’t make you glow;
A grafted branch bears no fruit, you should know.
When death’s veil comes to you, then finally
These pieces on your face fall and all see—
Yes, when departure time comes it is clear
Your skills in argument will disappear.
The world of silence then descends, so cease!
Those who don’t know this silence have no peace.
Polish your heart for one or two days, later
Make a new notebook from that burnished mirror,
For it was Joseph’s grace and power then
Which made the crone Zolaykha young again.
That crone’s frigidity would then transform
Due to July’s sun which was very warm.
And Mary’s burning anguish similarly
Gave the dry branch fresh dates miraculously.*
Hag, how long will you fight fate? Won’t you grow
And seek the ready cash? Let the past go!
Your face has no hope to look beautiful.
Use ink instead of rouge! None help at all.’

1290

1295

Once a sick man went up to a physician
And asked him, 'Check my pulse for me please, skilled one!
So, through it, you'll know all about my heart,
For this vein is connected to that part.'

1300

The heart's unseen—if you want information,
Seek it from that, for it has a connection!
The wind is hidden from the eye, good man,
So watch the dust and leaves move when you can:
Whether they're blown left or right, the direction
That they are blown from will help its detection.
If you seek the heart's drunkenness, then try
To watch well the narcissus-like drunk eye!

Since you are now far from God's Essence, you
May learn of it from what the Prophets do—
Hidden miracles from the true elect,
Those mystic masters, all have an effect
On the heart. Inside they have resurrections,
The least of which gives all intoxications.
A lucky one who has been near those blessed
May *sit with God* for passing such a test.
Miracles that affect inanimates—

1305

A rod, the waves, and *the full moon that splits*,*
If they strike your soul with no mediation
Through hidden links they start communication.
Affecting inert things is not the purpose—
They're for the hidden spirit that's so wondrous.
Minds can be moved then by inert things, though—
How marvellous is bread that had no dough!
Jesus's spread would never be reduced;*

1310

Mary's fruit without orchards was produced.*
The perfect one's soul's miracles renew
The seeker's inner soul like life that's new.
Deficient men are land birds near their sea
(Waterfowl though feel no anxiety).
Miracles weaken the uninitiated,
But strengthen souls of the initiated.
Since you don't sense the happiness inside

1315

Seek pointers constantly from the outside,
For these effects are on external senses
And tell of their producers to those senses.

Each medicine's efficacy is hidden
Just like the magic art of each magician:
When you observe all its effects and actions,
Though hidden it will come to your perceptions—
The power hidden inside it will be
Apparent once it takes effect, you see.
When all these things are manifest to you
How come effects don't bring God to your view?
Causes, effects, the kernel and the shell,
When you inspect are His effects as well.
You make friends with things due to their effects
So why not see the Giver of effects?
You make friends based on an imagining
So why not with the East and West's One King?
This discourse could go on and on, my friend.
May our desire be also without end!

1320

1325

Return to the story about the sick man.

Return to that tale on one who was ill
And that physician who would hide his skill!
He took his pulse and learnt of his state then—
There was no hope that he'd get well again.
He said, 'Do anything you feel like till
The pain goes from your body while you're ill.
Whatever your mind wants—don't hold back now
Lest that restraint cause suffering somehow!
View self-restraint as bad for your disease!
Do what you feel, exactly as you please!'
(God's words were then addressing a sick man
With '*Do what you wish!*'* found in the Qur'an.)
The sick man told him, 'Go your way and prosper!
I'm going for a stroll next to the river.
He strolled there as his heart wished, so he might

1330

Find his way out of his ill health's sad plight.

A Sufi was sat by the river—he

1335

Was washing himself of impurity.

The sick man saw his neck's nape and he longed

To slap him there, though he had not been wronged.

He raised his hand to slap the bare nape there

Of that soup-loving Sufi with no care,

Thinking: 'My doctor said I should let loose

All my desires and do what I should choose.

I'll slap him once we have an altercation:

*"Beware, don't cast yourself into destruction!"**

Destruction's self-restraint right here however—

1340

Slap him hard! Don't stay passive like another!'

When he slapped him it made such a loud sound

The Sufi yelled, 'You bastard!', looked around.

He wished to punch him very hard and tear

His moustache and his beard both hair by hair.

People are sick without a remedy

Yet slap each other—Satan's trickery.

They seek to cause harm to the innocent

And backbite as they grow malevolent.

You who would slap the innocent man's nape,

1345

Don't you see you'll be slapped on your own nape?

You who believe desire's your remedy

And slap the weak, the one who deviously

Told you this was just laughing then at you,

And he led Adam to wheat one time too:

'Eat this grain, you two who seek aid, as cure,

*So you may then forever more endure.'**

He tripped him up and gave him a big smack

On his nape, but the harm was just sent back.

He made him fall into a big mistake,

1350

But God was the support for Adam's sake.

Though filled with snakes, Adam was a strong mountain;

Unharméd, he was the antidote's own fountain.

You don't have any antidote, so how

Are you deluded you'll be saved somehow?

You don't have Abraham's trust in the Lord
To cut Esmail's head off with your own sword.*

You don't have miracles of Moses either
To make the Nile a roadway that is easier.*

If blessed ones fall from minarets, they will
Be saved by wind that fills their clothes up still,
But you're not sure of such a fate—why dare

To throw your body down now from up there?
A million like the Aad fell from that tower

And gave their lives to the wind at that hour—
Look at the ones who've fallen down and count
Since millions is a very large amount.

You can't walk on a tightrope, so stay sound,
Give thanks for feet and walk upon the ground!
Don't jump from mountains with mere paper wings—
Many heads have been lost by doing such things.

Although rage filled the Sufi, all aflame,
He looked hard at the outcome all the same.
The person with the highest rank up there
Is he who shuns the bait and sees the snare.

How excellent are outcome-seeing eyes
That save one from corruption and demise!
Mohammad had such visions—it is clear

Since he saw hell in detail while still here,
And God's Throne and the heavens too, at once
Tearing apart the veils of negligence.

If you wish to be safe from harm, my friend,
Close your eyes to the start and see the end,
So you'll see Non-being as existing really
And beings that you perceive as less true really!

At least see why the wise are so insistent
To seek out what is deemed as non-existent:

In begging one sees kindness that's not there,
In stores a profit that they then can share.

A crop is sought from fields when they're first sown,
And in plantations date-palms once they've grown.
Knowledge is sought from schools that would be new,

1355

1360

1365

1370

And goodness from a monastery too.
They've left existent things behind and now
Are seeking Non-existents anyhow.
God's handicraft's mine and its treasury
Are naught but Non-being made now plain to see.
We've given hints of this before to you—
Regard this and that speech as one, not two!

Some have said, 'Every craftsman in each instance
Is seeking out through his craft non-existence:

1375

The builder undeveloped places where

It's clear that everything's in disrepair;
The water-carrier empty pots to fill;

The carpenter a house with no door still.
Then they would rush to Non-existence while
Now they will run away from it a mile.

Since you hope for Non-being why try evading?

Why fight away what you are really craving?
Since Non-existence is what you are set on

1380

Why try avoiding self-annihilation?
If you're not made for Non-being, soul, then why
Wait for Non-being to come so you can try?

You've turned your heart from all your property,
You've thrown your heart's net into Non-being's sea—

Why is it then that you now run away
From that sea that has filled your net with prey?

Why call mystic provisions 'death'? So strange!

Observe the sorcery that caused this change!
His work's own magic closed your eyes and it

1385

Made lust come to your soul while in the pit.
The Maker's trick made your soul think with dread

The open plain holds huge snakes still unfed:
That's why it thinks its refuge is the pit—

It's death that's thrown him down there, isn't it?
What I've said on your errors you can find

In Attar's words as well, which can remind:*

Story about Shah Mahmud and the Indian slave.

The great Attar told this tale that's so good
 About the mighty warrior Shah Mahmud:
 On his campaign in India he obtained 1390
 A slave brought to him from war's spoils they'd gained.
 He made him deputy and later on
 With power over troops, and called him 'son'.
 That great one gave the details, so please read
 His version for the things that you still need!
 In brief, that youth sat on the golden throne
 Next to the mighty emperor on his own.
 He started weeping bitter tears one day—
 Mahmud said to him, 'Victor of today,
 Why weep? Has your fate turned out bad, successor 1395
 That you're above kings now next to the emperor?
 Viziers and troops line up before your throne
 Like stars next to the moon; your rank's well-known.'
 The youth said, 'I weep bitterly and frown
 Because my mother's far in my hometown.
 She'd threaten me by saying this to me:
 "May Mahmud put you in captivity!"
 My father would rebuff her at that moment:
 "What awful wrath you show to pick such torment!
 Can you not find another dreadful curse 1400
 That's lighter than this deadly one? What's worse?
 You are hard-hearted and so pitiless
 You'd kill him with a hundred swords, no less."
 I used to grow perplexed by what they'd say;
 My heart would fill with fear and grief this way,
 Thinking: "How hellish that Mahmud must be
 To be proverbial for such misery!"
 I used to tremble out of fear for you,
 Heedless of your might and your kindness too.
 If only my own mother now could see 1405
 On the king of the whole world's throne sits me!'

Poverty's from your 'Mahmud', useless one—
 Your nature keeps you scared of those who've won.
 If you'd learn of this Mahmud's mercy, you

Would shout out, 'May the ending be praised too!'
Poverty's from your 'Mahmud', timid failure—
Ignore that mother, your misguided nature!

If you become poverty's victim too

On Judgement Day you'll weep like babies do.

The body nurtures mother-like, one knows,

1410

But it is worse than several dozen foes.

When ill the body makes you find a cure,

When strong it makes you evil, so be sure

This unjust body's like a coat of armour—

It neither suits the winter or the summer.

Patience makes bad companions seem the best,

For patience is what opens up the breast.

Patience is what keeps nighttime's moon so radiant;

Patience with thorns is what keeps roses fragrant.

Milk's patience facing blood and bile so near

1415

Lets it help babies grow, as is so clear.

Prophets' patience with what they had to meet

From their deniers made them God's elite.

When you see someone in fine clothes, it's best

To guess they gained it through the patience test,

While one who's naked and extremely poor

Suffered a lack of patience to be sure.

Anyone sad, with anguish deep inside,

Is mixing with a fraudster who will hide—

If he'd shown patience and true loyalty

1420

He wouldn't have lost God's proximity.

He'd then have mixed with God like milk with honey,

Saying: '*I don't love those that set*'* when sunny.

He surely wouldn't have remained alone

Like a fire left to go out on its own.

He'd mixed with others so impatiently

So, separate from Him, he felt misery.

Your friendship is pure gold, so why entrust it

To someone who will cheat and can't be trusted?

Just stick with Him—what you entrust will not

1425

Then suffer loss or harm; that's your best shot.

Be like Him who created all our natures
 And nurtured then the Prophets' special natures.
 Give him a lamb—He'll give a flock, you see.
 The Lord's the Nurturer of each quality.
 Would you then trust a wolf with your lamb ever?
 Joseph and wolves won't travel once together.
 And if the wolf acts like a fox, it's sly—
 Don't be beguiled! No good will come. That's why.
 A savage might show you some sympathy,
 But he will harm you through his savagery:
 He has both kinds like a hermaphrodite—
 Both kinds of acts will soon be in plain sight.
 He hides his penis from the women, so
 He seems just like their sister down below.
 He hides his vulva from men, so that he
 Seems the same gender as them outwardly.
 'Due to his hidden vulva,' God has said,
 'We'll make a vulva on his nose instead,
 So that our mystics won't get tricked with ease
 By that flirt's skills and dangerous expertise.'
 This maleness isn't in each male you find—
 Beware! Fear dumb men if you've a sound mind!
 Don't listen to well-spoken stupid people
 For their talk is a poison that is lethal!
 They'll say, 'Soul of my mother, my eye's vision!'
 But they'll increase your grief and your depression.
 That mother tells your father, 'My child's now
 So thin—going to school did this somehow.
 If you'd had him with someone else, distress
 Which you have caused him would have been much less.'
 'If my child was another woman's, she
 Would have talked gibberish so similarly!'
 Flee her flirtation! You should know your daddy
 Gives slaps that are much better than her candy.
 This mother's self, this father wisdom, and
 The first's constraint, the last space to expand.
 You who give wisdom, come, God, rescue me!

1430

1435

1440

We only wish when You've wished previously!
Seeking's from You and so is goodness too—

1445

Who are we when the First and Last is You?
You speak, then listen and remain! We're nothing
In spite of all of our desires and yearning.
Now in exchange raise our joy for prostration!
Don't send the sloth now of predestination!
Predestination's for perfected ones,
But it's the gaol of merely slothful ones.
It's like the water of the Nile as well:

Water for Muslim, blood for infidel.
Wings take the falcon to the king and head,
But wings take crows to cemeteries instead.
Return now to Non-being's explanation,
The antidote which you believe is poison.
Go, mister, like the Indian boy! Stop fearing
The Mighty Sultan Mahmud of Non-being!
Fear the existence that belongs to you—

1450

That fancy's nothing and you're nothing too!
One nothing's lover of another nothing!
Has any nothing ambushed one more nothing?
Once all those fancies have left from your view
What you could not perceive gets clear for you.

1455

*'Those who have passed away do not grieve death. Their only regret is
losing life.'**

Mohammad, Mankind's leader, said: 'None who
Have left this world that is still home for you
Had pain, grief, or regret about their dying,
But they regretted their life was expiring.'
'Why did I not face death with more attention,
The storehouse of all fortune and provision?
Cross-eyed, I watched mere fancies here instead
Throughout my life, but now they are all dead.'
The dead regret not death but this instead:
'We didn't look beyond forms; now we're dead.

1460

We didn't see beyond waves' foam—its motion
And gathering of twigs comes from the ocean.'
The sea will cast the foam on land—look then
At 'foam' like that in cemeteries of men,
Then ask: 'Where is your movement now the sea
Has thrown you into a catastrophe?'
So they may tell you mystically: 'You should
Ask the sea this, not us. That would be good.'
How can foam shape forms without waves around?
Without wind how should dust rise from the ground?
You've seen the form's dust—see the wind that blows it!
You've seen the foam—see Being's sea that throws it!

1465

Come and look now, for vision counts alone!
Apart from that you're only flesh and bone.
Your fat did not make candles burn more bright;
Your flesh did not sate drunkards' appetite.
In vision melt your body all away!
Head for that vision and go all the way!
One vision sees just two yards up ahead,
Another two worlds and God's face instead—
What a huge difference then between these two!
Seek vision's kohl, and God knows best what's true!
Since you've heard well of Non-Being's sea's description
Strive non-stop now to reach that destination,
For Non-Being is the workshop's source, though it
Is empty and has no sign showing it.
All craftsmen seek Non-Being and ruins—they
Prefer to use them for their work's display.
The Everlasting Master naturally
Has Non-Being as His workshop as we see.
Wherever Non-Being's greater God's work there
Is greater if we ever should compare.
Since Non-Being is the highest stage, it's clear
Dervishes have excelled all others here,
Especially those who've lost their property
And bodily strength—this is not beggary:
Beggars have lost their wealth, so feel dismay—

1470

1475

Content men gamble their own selves away,
Therefore do not complain of pain you're feeling
When that's a steady steed towards Non-Being!
I've said this much—reflect on the rest now!

1480

Do *zeker* if your mind's frozen up somehow!
Zeker makes thoughts move again: make *zeker* the sun
For frozen thoughts and watch them thaw and run!
Attraction is the source, but don't you wait
For it to come—strive hard before it's late!
Giving up striving's pride and there's no way
That pride can fit with gambling things away.
Young man, forget acceptance and rejection!

1485

Just think of His command and prohibition!
Attraction's bird flies from its nest—once you
Have seen the dawn, put out the candle too!
Thanks to His light, eyes can perceive so well,
Seeing the kernel deep within the shell,
And in one mote the Everlasting Sun,
Inside one drop the ocean, in just one!

Returning once more to the story about the Sufi and the judge.

'It's not worth blindly giving up my head
In vengeance for that slap,' the Sufi said.
'I wear submission's cloak, as all can see:
It helps me take such slaps forbearingly.'
The Sufi saw his foe was weak, and so
He said: 'If I should punch him like a foe,
With one punch he would fall down straight away,
Then the king would for certain make me pay.
The tent is ruined and its peg's not in—
It's seeking an excuse now to cave in.
If due to a mere corpse I then should pay
With my life, what a most regretful day!'

1490

Since he could not then strike his enemy
He took him to the judge appropriately,
Saying: 'He is God's scales here obviously,

1495

The refuge from the devil's trickery—
The scissors cutting hatred and debate,
He cuts the two foes' war and words of hate.
His law can quell dissension and his spell
Bottles the devil up for us as well.'
On seeing these scales, greedy foes would then
Give up dissent and be obedient men.
Without scales even if you give them more
They won't be satisfied with your whole store.
The judge is kind and he rebuffs rebellion.

1500

He is a drop from the Last Judgement's ocean,
And, though the drop be small, still in its face
Is shown to us the ocean's water's grace.
If you keep free from dust your eyes' own cover
You'll see within a drop the Tigris river.
Parts tell of the condition of the whole—

The sunset's afterglow fulfils that role.
When God said: '*By the sunset's afterglow!*'*

1505

He meant the Prophet with this oath, we know.
Why should the ant have trembled for one grain
If through that it knows of the pile of grain?
Go back! That Sufi's acting crazily
And seeks revenge fast for the injury!
You who've been cruel, how can you feel glad now?
Don't you fear Him who takes revenge somehow?
Have you forgotten what you did there too

Since heedlessness pulled curtains over you?
If your own victim's hate weren't after you

1510

The heavenly orb would now be envying you,
But you're trapped by those claims and in duress—
You must beg pardon for your trespasses!
Lest the inspector seize you suddenly,
Make peace with God's own lover urgently!

The Sufi reached the one who'd slapped him, then
Grabbed his hem just like one of the wronged men
And dragged him to the local judge to say:
'Parade this idiot on an ass today

Or punish him with hard blows from a scourge,

1515

However you see fit—that's what I urge.

If someone dies through punishment from you

It's lawful and from you there's nothing due,

For if the judge's punishment kill someone

He's not responsible. He is no minion.'

He represents God and His justice too,

The plaintiff and defendant, both these two,

For he reforms for every victim's sake,

Not anger, fame or profit he can make.

Since it's for God and for His Judgement Day

1520

An error would mean blood-price one must pay—

Strike for your sake then you're responsible;

Strike for God and you're unimpeachable.

A father strikes his son who dies right there—

The father pays the blood-price. That is fair

When he strikes for himself with expectation

The son should serve him, as is the convention.

But if a teacher strikes and kills instead

This teacher pays no blood-price—*feel no dread!*

Because the teacher is God's deputy;

1525

For all trustees it's this way equally.

There's no requirement to serve teachers, so

He doesn't deal for his own sake the blow

Unlike the father who did selfishly

And found a blood-price was obligatory.

O Zo'l-Faqaar, behead your selfhood, then

Be selfless like a dervish among men!

When you are selfless anything you do

You're safe: *You did not throw it when you threw.**

That's on God and not on God's own trustee.

1530

The law books make this clear for all to see.

Every shop trades in different goods—this one,

The Masnavi, sells poverty, my son.

There is fine leather in the shop for shoes—

The wood there's for the shoe mould that they use.

The curtain shop has cloth, and if you see

Iron there, that's for measuring easily.
Our *Masnavi* is Unity's own store;
All else are idols. There's just one. No more.
It's like '*high flying cranes*', * if you should praise
Idols to trap the masses in such ways—
He read it quickly in *The Star*, but it
Was just a trick and not a part of it.*
The infidels bowed down immediately;
The way they did was quite a mystery.
Beyond is theory and debates with reasons—
Just stay with Solomon! Don't mix with demons!

1535

Tell the tale of the judge and Sufi and
The bad man who was sick and underhand.
The judge said to the Sufi: 'Make your case
So I can start now to sketch out a trace.
What is the vengeance for? Where is your foe?
This one looks like a ghost through poor health's woe.
The law is for the living and mature,
Not for those in the graveyard—are you sure?'
Those who are headless due to poverty
Are more effaced than dead men actually.
The latter are effaced in just one way,
But Sufis are in numerous ways, we'd say:
Death is one slaying—theirs is millions though,
Each with a blood-price greater than we know:
God has killed them so many times and He
Has paid their blood-price so expensively.
Inwardly like Jerjis, each of these men
Was killed and lived repeatedly again.*
Savouring the judge's spears once they'd been slain,
They'd cry with burning pain: 'Hit me again!'
Loving that Being that nurtures souls of men,
The slain one's so keen to be killed again!

1540

1545

'I am judge for the living,' he then said,
'How can I be the graveyard's, for the dead?
He may not look like he's in there right now,

1550

But the graves have come into him somehow.'

You've seen dead men inside graves—now, blind man,

Observe the grave that's found inside a man!

If ever bricks from tombs should fall on you

How can you seek the compensation due?

Ignore the rage of dead men and their spite—

With bathhouse paintings one should never fight.

Give thanks a living one did not hit you—

1555

What they reject God then rejects it too.

The living one's rage is God's rage, you know,

For that pure-skinned one lives through God below.

God slew him and breathed on his feet, then He,

Like butchers, skinned him very rapidly.

The breath remains till his return through death,

For God's breath is not like the butcher's breath:

The two breaths are so different, not the same:

The first is honour and the second shame.

The latter takes away life and is harming,

1560

The former through God makes life everlasting.

This breath can't be described by words we speak—

Rise from the pit's depth to the castle's peak!

'Parade him on an ass?' the judge then said.

'Who would put firewood's sketch on it instead?

An ass's back is not where he should sit

A bier is actually more appropriate.

What is oppression? To misplace somewhere—

Don't leave things lost and thus displaced—beware!'

The Sufi said, 'So you permit that he

1565

Slap me without reprisal and stay free?

Is it allowed for cunning brutes that way

To slap a Sufi and not have to pay?'

The judge asked, 'How much do you own? A lot?'

He said, 'Six dirhams is all that I've got.'

The judge said, 'Keep three and, without a fuss,

Hand him the other three! This comes from us.'

He'd thought, 'He's wounded, very ill and poor—

He'll need three dirhams just to eat, for sure.'
The slapper's eyes fell on the judge's nape
And it was better than the Sufi's nape.
He raised his hand to slap it, telling all:
'The punishment for my slap was so small.'
Then he approached the judge as if to whisper,
But slapped him hard instead and made this offer:
'Take all six dirhams, you two foes! Let me
Flee your association instantly!'

1570

The judge is angered by the slap of the poor man and the Sufi taunts the judge.

The judge grew angry and the Sufi said:
'A just decree, no doubt inside my head!
Why then approve for someone else what you
Do not approve being done to yourself too?
Don't you know if you dig a pit for me
You'll fall in that same pit eventually?
Have you not heard the Prophet's words on justice:
"Those who dig pits for others..."? Put in practice!
Now your decree was like that, since it bought
A slap on your own nape, which you'd not sought.
All your decrees should fill you now with dread
Of what they will soon bring upon your head.
You pity kindly that one who'd abuse,
Saying: "You keep these dirhams for your use!"
Chop off the wrongdoer's hand! It's no occasion
To hand the reins to him—your stipulation
Is like the goat's, you who don't know of justice:
She gave the wolf her milk. This is malpractice!'

1575

1580

The judge's reply to the Sufi.

'We have to be content,' the judge then said,
'No matter what fate should bring on our head.
I'm pleased with what the holy books decree

Although *the bitter truth's* all that you see:
My heart's an orchard, my eyes clouds with rain—
When the clouds weep the orchard smiles again.'

1585

The laughing sunshine causes droughts we see
And they cause orchards' death and agony.
God's words: '*Weep much!*'* you must of course have read,
So why still keep a half-baked smile instead?
Like candles you can be the house's radiance
If you shed tears like it does in this instance.
The parent's stern face saves the child instead
From all the harm that might fall on its head.
You know the joy of laughing, friend of mine.
Now learn of weeping's—that's a sugar mine.
Since thoughts of hell cause weeping in you too
Hell is better than heaven now for you.
Laughing is hidden in the weeping, son—
Seek treasures in the ruins, simpleton!
Though sorrow's pleasures may be hidden now,
Water of Life's in darkness anyhow.

1590

Hoofprints trail backwards from the destination
To trick men, so you must pay close attention—
While watching make your two eyes seem like four:
Join the Beloved's eyes to see much more!
Read the Qur'an: '*Their work is in consulting.*'*
Before God's Friend don't moan as that's insulting!
He's the support and refuge on the path—
When you look closely he's the actual path.
Once you reach him, be silent! Stop your muttering!
Don't make yourself the bezel now of that ring!
Pay close attention at the Friday prayer—
All quietly concentrate on one thing there.
Drag your load to the silence when you go—
If you seek signs, don't make yourself the show!
The Prophet said, 'In the sea of concerns
The stars that guide are my companions.'
Focus then on the stars! Seek the path, seek!

1595

1600

Speech will disturb your vision, so don't speak!
 If you say just two words, make no mistake
 Darkness will soon start flowing in light's wake.
 Have you not heard the Prophet say on sorrow
 That talk produces more of it to follow?
 Even well-guided words—don't let them out
 For they will lead to more talk flowing out:
 Once your mouth opens it's then not secure
 In your control—dark words flow from the pure.
 A prophet won't speak through lust though, for how
 Could God's pure ones possess desire somehow?
 Those who're made pure through God's communication
 And they alone can speak with God's permission.
 Make yourself one who speaks through ecstasy
 So you won't be talk's victim tragically!

1605

The Sufi questions the judge.

'When gold's from one source,' then the Sufi said,
 'Why is one gold good and one bad instead?
 When we've emerged here from the same Creator
 Why has one come drunk while the other's sober?
 When flowing streams come from a single sea
 Why is one sweet, one poisonous? Please tell me!
 When light rays come from the Eternal Sun
 Why does false dawn rise as an extra one?
 When eyes receive kohl from one source, why then
 Is there cross-eyedness still among some men?
 When God is in charge of the mint, isn't it
 Strange that it makes both real and counterfeit?
 When God has called the path "My way" why then
 Does it have guards but also highwaymen?
The child's the father's inner nature really,
 But how can sage and fool come from one belly?
 Who's seen in thousands any kind of oneness
 Or movements by the million come from stillness?'

1610

1615

The judge answers the Sufi.

The judge said, 'Sufi, don't you get perplexed!

Listen to a fine parable's take next!

Just as the lover's utter restlessness

1620

Is caused by the Beloved's tranquillity—

He's mountain-firm and shuns all who flirt here

While lovers shake like leaves in nervous fear.

His laughter makes one cry, and similarly

His honour makes men lose theirs shamefully.'

All of these 'Whys?' and 'Hows?' that one might mention

Are foam-like on the ocean without question.

Its acts and essence have no opposite

Nor like. Existents are all clothed by It.

Can something give birth to its opposite?

1625

No, it will flee and jump away from it.

With good and bad what is the same? How can

Something make its own likeness, thinking man?

And when there are two same things why is one

More apt for being made than the other one?

Likes and opposites are so many they're

Like foam in That Sea that's beyond compare.

The Ocean's win and loss have no condition—

How could they fit in the heart of That Ocean?

Your soul's its plaything and the least of these.

1630

How did the soul acquire its qualities?

Such A Sea in Whose every drop the spirit

And intellect are less than bodies in it,

Transcending quantity and quality,

Where Universal Intellect *can't see*.

Intellect tells the body, 'You can't earn,

Being lifeless, whiffs of the Sea of Return.'

The body says, 'I'm certainly your shadow—

Who would try to get help from their mere shadow?'

This is bewilderment's house, truth be told,

1635

Not where the worthy feel they can be bold.

The sun's rays serve each mote that you can see
Like servants who do so devotedly.
The lion lays its head before the deer,
The falcon, too, once a small quail should near.
You don't believe? Didn't the Prophet seek
Prayers for the men who were both poor and weak?
If you say, 'Teaching was his aim, not prayer'
Why did he leave them ignorant back there?
Rather he knows that the Great Monarch places
His royal treasure inside ruined spaces.
His backward-facing footprints may cause doubt,
Though every part of him can spy throughout:
The Truth's immersed in more Truth actually
So sects are numbered at just seventy.
I'll change my topic now again right here—
O Sufi, open wide now your soul's ear!

1640

If once a blow from heaven lands on you
Expect a robe of honour to come too:
You felt the slap, O trusted one, so well—
Along with necks one eats thigh meat as well.
For He is not a king who slaps alone
And doesn't give a crown to wear or throne.
The whole world's worth a gnat's wing, isn't it?
But for one slap rewards are infinite.
Pull your neck free from this world's golden collar
And then accept the slaps that God might offer!
The slaps the Prophets took on their napes led
To them then raising up high their own head.
Be present youth and pay attention too,
So that He finds a home at last for you,
Or He'll take back the robe of honour saying:
'I didn't see here anybody staying.'

1645

1650

The Sufi questions the judge again.

The Sufi asked, 'What if this world would raise
Its mercy's eyebrows for all men always,

And not bring turmoil constantly for us
Nor stings through changing colour as it does,
If night should not steal day's lamp, and December
Should not make the fine orchard start to wither?
If fever's stone should not break health's jar here
Nor feeling safe transform to grief through fear—
How would His mercy's kindness be made less
If one felt sure of it and lacked all stress?'

1655

*The judge's answer to the Sufi's question and how he uses as a parable
the story about the Turk and the tailor.*

'You're hollow, Sufi!' then the same judge said,
'Like Kufic *kafs*;* no wisdom's in your head.
Haven't you heard that one with much to say
Used to at night give tailor's tricks away,
Sharing with people stories that were old
About all of the stealing he'd been told?
He would tell everybody who was listening
That they'd steal scraps of cloth that they were trimming.
At night he'd read a book on theft aloud
In front of all who gathered in the crowd.
Since he drew listeners and from this felt glory
All of his limbs themselves became a story.'

1660

*The Prophet said: 'God transmits wisdom through the preachers'
tongues in accord with the aspiration of the listeners.'*

If someone's eloquent, the audience draws it,
His energy comes from those who absorb it:
The most skilled harpist thinks his harp's a burden
If there is no one who will carefully listen.
No song comes to his mind then in that moment
And neither can his fingers make a movement.
If no one's ears could hear the Unseen, then
None would bring revelation down for men.
Without eyes to see God's work all around

1665

The heavens wouldn't even turn around:
The actual meaning of 'If not for you'*
Is that it's all for that seer who can view.
Those craving food and partners they can bed
Lack love for God's work—lust fills up their head.
You don't pour good broth in a bowl until
There are some hungry dogs that want their fill.
Become the cave's dog* so His choosing you
Can free you from this trough the rest use too!

1670

When he told of the theft that was uncaring,
Which tailors would commit, in tales worth sharing,
A Turk from Kheta in the crowd grew mad
At this man for exposing all he had—
Like Resurrection, he'd reveal at night
Those secrets to men who were very bright.
When you approach a war you'll quickly see
Two foes exposing secrets readily—
View that time as the hour that is the last
And that mouth talking as the trumpet blast,
For God has made the cause for anger and
Has made those vile acts known across the land.
After he'd mentioned many thefts this way
The Turk grew angry and hurt with dismay:
'O story-teller, in your city who
Is expert in deceit and trickery too?'

1675

*The Turk makes claims and bets 'That tailor won't be able to steal
anything from me!'*

'A tailor called Purshosh,' was what he said,
'In theft and cunning he is way ahead.'
'I guarantee that he can't steal from me
Even some thread, though he try carefully.'
He was told, 'Men much cleverer than you
He has checkmated without much ado.
Don't be deluded by your cleverness!
You'll soon be dazzled by his wiliness.'

1680

The Turk then wagered as his sureness grew:

‘He won’t rob me of something old or new.’

Supporters made him more sure he was right

1685

And so he made the wager without fright:

‘I’ll give my own Arabian horse if he

Robs me with all his skills and trickery.

And if he can’t I’ll get a horse from you,

For that’s the stake that I have wagered too.’

That night the Turk could not sleep due to dread,

Warring with that thief’s image in his head.

The next day he took satin and went to

That villain’s market stall, of which he knew.

He warmly greeted him. The expert then

1690

Got up to welcome him like generous men,

Greeting the Turk with more warmth still to start

Planting affection for him in his heart.

Once he heard sweet talk from this man, instead

He threw his Istanbul cloth down and said:

‘Cut this into a coat for battle day

And styled to flatter my physique this way:

Snug at the top, so that chest muscles show,

Yet, to let my legs move, quite wide below.’

‘I’ll give you a great deal,’ was his reply.

1695

To show that he agreed he touched his eye.

He measured and inspected it, and then

He started to chat with the Turk again,

Telling tales of high-ranking men he knew

And of the generous gifts they gave him too,

But also of the misers’ stinginess,

Giving examples to raise laughs no less.

In a flash he brought scissors out for cutting

While telling stories without interrupting.

*The tailor tells jokes and the Turk’s two narrow eyes shut due to the force
of the laughter—in this way the tailor finds an opportunity.*

The Turk laughed at the tales that he would share,

1700

His eyes then shutting like a narrow hair.
The tailor stole a strip by placing it
Under his thigh—only God witnessed it.
(God saw it, but He chose then to conceal—
If one exceeds the limits, He'll reveal.)
From savouring tales the Turk's boasts at the start
Quickly departed both his mind and heart.
What satin? What boast? And what wager's stake?
The Turk's drunk on his jokes—what a mistake!
'For God's sake,' then he begged, 'Keep telling me
These jokes! They nourish me incredibly.'
The villain told a joke that was hilarious—
The Turk fell laughing on his back, delirious.
While he was feeding on jokes, unaware,
The thief hid cloth behind the belt he'd wear.
The Turk from Khota later begged him: 'Please
Keep telling jokes! They bring me to my knees.'
'An even funnier joke now!' he would say—
He'd turned that Turk completely to his prey.
The boastful Turk was drunk on laughter now,
Eyes shut, mind closed, and stupefied somehow.
For the third time the tailor stole, since he
Had gained through jokes the opportunity,
But when the Khotan Turk asked him once more
The tailor didn't steal cloth like before—
This fourth time he felt pity for the Turk
And kept unjust tricks out of all his work.
He thought, 'This crazed man has become addicted,
Not knowing what a loss I have inflicted.'
Showering kisses on the tailor, then
The Turk asked, 'For God's sake, tell me again!'
How long do you want stories to be said,
You who're a tale yourself and virtually dead?
No tale is funnier than you—go stand
Next to your wretched grave to understand!
You're in the grave of ignorance and doubt.
Why keep on seeking jokes about fate out?

1705

1710

1715

For how long will you lap up flattery?

It harms your mind and soul though you can't see.

Time's jokes are an impermanent companion;

1720

They've put to shame men like you by the million.

The Universal Tailor tears and sews

The clothes of child-like travellers, but none knows.

Though his jokes give gifts to the orchard's trees

In winter they will lose them to the breeze.

Old children sit around him begging still

He tell them jokes on fortune, good or ill.

*The tailor tells the Turk: 'Be quiet, for if I tell any more jokes the coat
will end up too tight for you!'*

The tailor said, 'Stop, eunuch! Not again!

If I tell more jokes you will suffer then.

Your coat will turn out too tight for your body—

1725

Who does that to themselves? There is nobody.

Why are you laughing? If you had a clue

Instead you would weep blood for all I do.'

*Explaining how the idle who seek out tales are like that Turk and the
world of delusion and treachery like that tailor, and that lusts and women
are the world's telling of jokes while life is like that satin before the tailor
to be made into an enduring coat and garment of piety.*

Delusion's tailor cuts your life's cloth sadly

With passing months as scissors, very gradually.

You'll want your star to smile continually

And fortune to reach you perpetually;

You'll rage at bad luck it brings down on you,

And all the spitefulness and hatred too.

Its silence will annoy you endlessly

1730

And the grief, bad luck, and hostility.

'Why won't the joyful Venus dance?' you'll say.

Don't wait for its good luck and dance this way!

Your star says, 'If I jest now any more

You'll be ashamed then fully to the core.'
Don't blame the stars for cheating like a faker!
Look at your own love for the counterfeiter!

Parable

A man was heading to a shop one day,
But found that women had then blocked the way:
Running hot-footed, this man was so shocked
That by fair women his way had been blocked.
He turned to one, 'Vile one, it's so uncanny
You little girls are here and you're so many.'
That woman turned to him, 'Don't be so sad,
O trusty one, or think that it is bad
That we fair women are so numerous,
Since, though there are so many here of us,
You still prefer vile sodomy for fun—
Shame on both giver and receiving one!'

1735

Don't focus on time's awful situations
The heavens send—don't deem them tribulations!
Don't focus on all this food conservation,
This famine, all the fear and trepidation—
Consider that, despite its bitterness,
You are devoted to them nonetheless!
Consider bitter trial a grace source, while
Marv and Balkh you should deem the tortuous trial!*
Abraham didn't flee harm yet survived;*
Ebn-e Adham fled royal rank yet thrived.*
One burns, the other doesn't—how amazing!
All's upside down in spiritual wayfaring.

1740

1745

The Sufi repeats the question.

'That One whose help is sought,' the Sufi said,
'Can make our business free from loss ahead.
He who turns fire to roses and to trees

Can make this place free from all injuries.
 That One who brings forth roses from thorns can
 Turn winter into spring with ease, good man.
 That One who makes the cypress thrive can also
 Transform into enormous joy all sorrow.
 That One who gave existence to non-being,
 If He keeps it, what loss would He be seeing—
 He who gives bodies souls so they live, why
 Should He lose out if they're not made to die;
 Or if He gives His servant what his soul
 Longs for without the need for toil at all;
 Or if He spares the weak from self's affliction
 Pricking them and the devil's cursed temptation?'

1750

The judge's reply to the Sufi.

The judge said, 'Were there no command that's bitter
 Nor good and bad, nor stone nor bright pearl either,
 No devil, flesh, nor lust that tempt all men,
 Nor wound, nor war, nor combating, what then?
 Would the King call His servants what He should
 And name them fittingly, dumb wretch? How could
 He say, "O firm one, O forbearing one."
 How could He say, "O wise one, O brave one!"
 How could there be sincere and patient people
 When there's no thief nor Satan to do evil?
 Rostam, Hamza, and sodomites would be
 Considered equal, wisdom void, you see.*

1755

Knowledge and wisdom let you know the way—
 If all could find it, they'd lack worth today.
 Would you let both worlds be wrecked for the sake
 Of sensual nature's vile shop? Big mistake!
 I know you're pure and not a simpleton,
 And that your question's for each vulgar one.
 Fate's harshness and all hardship hurt much less
 Than exile from God through your heedlessness,
 For these will pass, but that will not my dear—

1760

Lucky ones have aware souls that they steer.'

*A story explaining that patience in bearing hardships is easier than
patience in bearing separation.*

A woman asked her husband, 'Please tell me 1765
You who are done with kindness totally,
Why don't you care about me and how long
Must I live in this wretched state? How long?'
He said, 'I'm trying to earn money now;
Though needy, I strive so hard anyhow.
I must provide both clothes and money, darling,
And you get both from me with nothing lacking.'
The wife showed then a sleeve on her own shirt—
It was so rough and also caked with dirt:
'Its roughness hurts my body—who would bring 1770
Someone as clothes to wear such a cheap thing?'
He said, 'I'll ask one question, wife, of you:
I am poor—this is the best I can do.
It's rough, coarse, and displeasing, I agree,
But, wise wife, think about it carefully!
What's worse: this or divorce now in your view?
This sleeve or separation, I ask you?'

O you who moan in that way equally
About your suffering and your poverty,
Abandoning lust tastes bitter, but it's better 1775
Than being apart from God, from our own Maker.
Jihad and fasting are hard for the best,
But they beat distance from Him Who will test:
How can pain last when that Most Generous One
Asks you: 'How are you doing, wounded one?'
If it's beyond you, so He won't ask you,
Your savour's like His asking after you.
Those lovely ones, the heart's physicians, turn
Towards the sick to ask them and thus learn.
Should they be wary of disgrace, they will 1780
Find a way to send messages there still.

If not the thought is in their heart's own cover—
The Loved One stays informed about His lover.

O you who seek a marvellous tale, now read
The tale of those who play love's game—take heed!
For such a long time you've boiled in the heat
Yet you've not been half-cooked; you're still dry meat.
Your whole life you've seen justice of His kind
Yet you are more naïve still than the blind.
His students turn to masters! That's the rule,
But you've instead gone backwards, you blind fool.
You've not learned from your parents anything,
Nor learned from night and day a single thing.

1785

Parable

A mystic asked a Christian priest, 'Are you
Older or your long beard that all can view?'
He answered, 'I was born before it grew;
Without it I've seen so much of life too.'
The mystic said, 'Your beard changed, turning white,
But your vile nature hasn't—that's not right:
Born after you, it has surpassed you easily.
You're dry because you crave broth greedily;
You were born with the same complexion and
You've not stepped forward since then. Understand:
You're buttermilk still in the churn for it
And haven't taken butter yet from it;
You're dough left in the clay jar that's not risen,
Though you've spent your whole life inside the oven;
You're cannabis inside soil that should grow,
But you get high just when lust's wind should blow;
Like Moses's Jews in the desert sun
You've wandered in the same place, foolish one—
You walk fast each day till the night, but then
You find yourself back at the start again.
While it's the golden calf you still adore
You won't get to traverse light years and more.

1790

1795

While for the calf their hearts had a soft spot
The desert seemed a whirlpool that is hot.
Besides the calf which you got from Him, you
Got endless grace and bounties from Him too—
Cow-natured, you love that gold calf no less,
Your hearts forgetting those huge kindnesses.
Ask all your body parts now, ‘Hey, how come?’
They have a hundred tongues, though they’re thought dumb,
To tell you what that Sole Provider’s given
Which on the pages of time have been hidden.
You’re keenly seeking stories night and day—
Each part is actually sharing them some way.
When each part first emerged from Non-existence
How much of joy and grief came from that instance.
Since if there is no savour no part grows,
Becoming thin instead through hardship’s blows,
The part stays here, but joy leaves memory—
Hidden from senses, not gone gradually.
Cotton is born in the hot summer days—
Summer’s forgotten, though the cotton stays.
Ice is born in the winter, but stays on
With us although the winter has then gone.
That ice is just like hardship’s souvenir—
Summer’s is fruit that in cold months stays here.
And all your body parts are similarly
Telling about the bounty previously,
Just like a woman who had twenty children,
Each one evoking rapture she had felt then—
Without it pregnancy would not arrive:
Without it orchards will not bloom and thrive.
The pregnant with their children by their sides
Are proof of spring’s love-making, though that hides.
And every tree, through suckling its own children,
Like Mary, is made pregnant by one hidden.
Although in water fire’s concealed by it
A million bubbles still froth up in it.
Although the fire is so blocked from our vision,
Froth, with ten fingers, gives its indication

1800

1805

1810

1815

Like bodily parts of union's drunks we see
Pregnant with words and states of ecstasy.
Ecstasy's beauty leaves them with mouths gaping;
Their eyes view this world no more—it's amazing!
These children aren't made of material substance,
So they're not seen by our eyes in this instance—
They were produced by pure illumination
So they are veiled quite simply from our vision.
We said 'born', but it's not birth actually—
Such words are used to guide pragmatically.

1820

Keep silent till the King says '*Say!*'* Don't play
Nightingales with this Special Rose today!
This Rose talks passionately, O nightingale—
Be all ears! Quit tongues! They're of no avail.
These types of purest symbols witness justly
Union with God's profound, inherent mystery.
Both kinds of beauty, pleasing and refined,
Bear witness to past pregnancies, you'll find,
Like ice that in the months of the hot summer
Each moment tells the tale of the past winter,
Recalling frost and cold winds that would blow
In difficult days not so long ago.
Just as fruit in the winter help recall
The story of God's kindness to us all,
And of the time the sun was smiling as
It made love to the brides of fields of grass.
The feeling's gone, your limbs its souvenir—
Ask them or just recall it yourself here!
When grief should get you down, if you are smart
You'll question all despair found in your heart
And say: 'O sorrow that denies provision
Of bounties from That One who has perfection,
Though fresh springs may not be yours constantly
Your body's like stored roses—can't you see?
Body rose, thought rosewater, now the wonder
Is that rose is denied by its rosewater!'

1825

1830

Not even straw's earned by apes who're ungrateful;
Sun and clouds serve those prophet-like, so faithful.
The apes' law is ungrateful stubbornness;
The Prophets' way is filled with thankfulness.
See what misdeeds did to the apes and then
What good deeds did for prophet-like great men!
In built-up places you find dogs that bite,
In ruins treasures of success and light.
If there were no eclipse of the soul's moon
Philosophers would not stray far so soon—
The clever people, since they lose their way,
Have 'idiot' branded on their nose that day.

1835

1840

Remainder of the story about the renunciant who wanted to receive daily bread without working to earn it.*

That helpless one who was then penniless
And suffered hardship on top of distress
Would beg while praying and in supplications:
'O God, the Guardian of all human guardians,
Without exertion You created me—
Give daily bread without toil due from me!
You gave five jewels for my head to store
And You gave hidden senses too—five more—
Gifts from You are innumerable—I've tried
To tell them, but my shame leaves me tongue-tied.
You single-handedly created me
So fix my daily bread needs fittingly!
He said this prayer for many years throughout
And then eventually it came about,
Like that one who had begged God for provisions
That were all lawful and without exertions
Required of him. A cow then brought him solace
In David's time and his inspired, true justice.*
This one was desperate too in how he'd try
And he succeeded in getting a reply.
He would get doubtful sometimes when he'd pray

1845

1850

And this was due to the reward's delay,
But Generous God's bestowal of hope became
Good news's guarantee before it came.
If out of weariness he'd feel despair
While striving he'd hear God's '*Come!*'* through the air.

The Maker raises and abases too—
Nothing would get done if not for these two:
The ground is low, the sky's in a high realm—
The heavens wouldn't turn if not for them.
The earth has its own highs and lows down here,
Barren for half and blooming half the year.
Time has its highs and lows in its own way
For one half's night, the other half is day.
Our constitution can be low or high:

1855

Now healthy, now so sick it makes us cry.
All of the world's states are like this throughout:
We see war and then peace, famine and drought.
By these two wings the world floats in the air
And all souls live off fear and hope from there,
So the world shakes like leaves in the north wind
And death and Resurrection's *Semum* wind.*

1860

So Jesus's vat of onecolouredness
Will yet make hundred-coloured vats worth less,*
Since that world's like a saltmine and whatever
Went there could not be coloured then no matter:
Look at the earth—people of every colour
Once in the grave are all of the same pallor.
This is the saltmine for what is external—

1865

A different saltmine waits for what's internal:
For mystic matters that saltmine will be
Present from pre- to post-eternity.
Here oldness is newness's opposite—
There newness has none and you can't count it.
Mohammad's light will brighten just like this
And turn to light a million darknesses.
Through that great ruler all became as one:
Jew, Christian, polytheist, and Magian.

A million shadows, short or long, were one
In the light of the mystic secret's sun.
Long, short, and wide could not remain at all—
All kinds of shadows were pawned to it. All.

1870

Onecolouredness on Resurrection Day
Will be shown to the good and bad some way,
For, in that world, truths take form so one sees
And our own shapes will match our qualities:
Hidden thoughts take the form of books that side;
Linings of clothes appear on the outside.

Secrets today are cows that have two colours,
While the sects' discourses have many others:
With many-minded multicolouredness

1875

The unicoloured world's not shown to us.
Greeks hidden, it's the Ethiopians' own dawn:
It's nighttime and the daytime is the pawn.
It is the wolf's turn—Joseph's in the well.*
Egyptians rule; Pharaoh is king as well,
So for a few days these curs have their portions
Of this world's false and merciless provisions.

Lions wait in the jungle for the sound
Of God's command, 'Come!'^{*} to be spread around.
The lions will come out and then God shows
Their income and expense, so each one knows.

1880

Man's essence will encompass land and sea;
Two-coloured cows will be slain mercilessly—
Resurrection Day of slaughter for the cattle
Will be a festival for all the faithful.

All waterfowl on that day of their slaughter
Will sail like ships upon the ocean's water,
So *those who die will die with proofs they see*
And those who're saved will have full certainty.^{*}

1885

So falcons fly back to the sultan's hand
And crows fly to the graveyard in this land,
For bones and bits of shit instead of bread
Are the desserts on which these crows are fed.

Wisdom's sugar's unsuitable for crows

Like dung worms for the orchard where fruit grows;

Effete men cannot fight the carnal soul;

Musk doesn't suit a donkey's anus hole.

Women aren't meant for combat—how can they

1890

Suit then the greater jihad anyway?*

Unless a Rostam's hidden in her body

Though that's rare: Mary, but not anybody.*

Women can be concealed in men as well

When they're fainthearted and then all can tell.

In that world femaleness takes form in those

Not ready to be real men, and it shows.

The Day of Judgement's just: justice means that

Your feet will wear the shoes, your head the hat.

Thus every seeker reaches what they're seeking

1895

And every setting thing its place of setting.

No goal's denied to seekers, I tell you:

Heat joins the sun, and water joins clouds too.

This world's Its Maker's house of punishment:

You've caused harm—get struck to your detriment!

Look at the chastised people's bones and hair!

Wrath's sword flung them all over through the air.

The feet and feathers of birds in the snare

Show without speech God's wrath's effect. Beware!

They die and rest in tombs, but those won't last

1900

For corpses that have started to rot fast.

God's justice has paired all and you'll see that,

Elephant with its own kind, gnat with gnat.

Mohammad's friends: the four who were the first;

Bu Jahl's: Otbe, Zo'l-Hemar, the worst.*

The glutton's Kaaba is a lavish spread

While Gabriel's is the *sedra* tree instead.*

The mystic's *qebila*'s union's light; the scholar

Of mere philosophy's: conjecture.

And the ascetic's *qebila* is his Lord,

1905

The flatterer's a purse of gold he'll hoard;

For mystics: patience and endurance too;

Form-worshippers: stone images they view.
The mystic's *qebla* is the Lord of Grace;
Appearance-lovers choose a woman's face.
You can compare things old and new like this,
But if you're bored, stick to your businesses!
God gives us golden goblets full of wine—
Broth poured in troughs is fitting for the swine.
God said, 'We've sent a suitable provision
For those We gave a certain disposition.
We've made one as a lover of mere bread,
Another drunk on his Beloved instead.'
If happy with your disposition now
Why flee what's suited to you anyhow?
Wear a burqa if femaleness suits you!
Carry a dagger if Rostam* suits you!
This discourse could continue endlessly
But that fakir now suffers penury.

1910

*Story about the treasure scroll which said: 'Next to a domed building
turn so you are facing the qebla, put an arrow in your bow and shoot it.
The treasure will be found at the spot where the arrow falls.'*

One night he dreamed (but what's sleep actually?
Sufis have vision of reality)
A voice said, 'You who've seen toil, wayfarer,
Go find some paper of the stationer:
At your own stationer's store now secretly
Handle the sheets of paper till you see
A piece of such a colour and shape, then
To privately read it, son, leave again:
After you steal it from him, get away
From all the crowds and bustle of the day
To read it privately alone somewhere,
And don't let others read it too once there!
Yet if the secret comes out, don't fear it—
No one else can gain from that sheet one bit.
If all this drags on for a while, beware!

1915

1920

Make “*Don’t despair!*”* then your continuous prayer!’
The harbinger then touched the fakir’s heart,
Saying: ‘Endure its hardship. Time to start!’
When that young man awoke he felt so jolly
He could not be contained in this world fully.
His gall bladder would have torn in excitement
If not for God’s protection at that moment.
He was so happy he heard from God’s presence
An answer through so many veils and distance.
His hearing pierced the veil—with head held high
He passed beyond the heavens through the sky,
Thinking with confidence his vision may
Now penetrate the Unseen’s veil some way,
And when his senses pass the veil in full
God’s speech and sight would be continual.

1925

He headed right then to the stationery store
And handled papers as told to before.
His eyes could see that piece of paper clearly
With signs the voice had told him of correctly—
He slipped it under his arm: ‘Sir, good day,
In just a moment I’ll come back this way.’
He found a private nook and read it there
And grew bewildered and perplexed: ‘A rare
And priceless treasure scroll like this? No way!
How was it left among some scraps this way?’
The thought came to his mind that God, the King,
Is the Protector here of everything.

1930

How could the Guard permit it for someone
To snatch it casually from the store and run?
Should cash and gold be left out in the open,
Without God’s letting you none can be stolen,
And though you read a long book ceaselessly
You won’t recall it if that’s destiny.
If you don’t read, but serve God, you’ll begin
To learn new sciences from deep within.
Moses’s hand spread from his breast such light*
That it seemed that the moon was far less bright:

1935

1940

‘That which you sought from that most awesome sphere,
Moses, it raised its head from your breast here,
So you might thus learn that the lofty heavens
Are just reflections of Mankind’s perceptions.’
Is it not true the Glorious One created
Intellect first of all things He created?
This talk is clear yet hidden from the fly
Which can’t go near the Anqaa in the sky.
Son, go back to that story, persevere
About the treasure trove and the fakir!

1945

*Conclusion of the story about the fakir and the sign showing the location
of the treasure.*

The treasure-scroll had these words written down:
‘Know there is treasure buried outside town!
Go to that large domed building with a shrine
Facing the desert outside town, align
Your back to it and face the *qebila* so
You can release an arrow from your bow
That way, then find your arrow’s landing spot
And keep on digging to attain your lot.’
That young man brought a strongbow to that place
And fired an arrow to the mentioned space,
Then fetched an axe and a strong spade as well
To dig the area where the arrow fell.
But he and his tools got worn out by pressure
And didn’t find a trace of hidden treasure.
Each day he fired an arrow in this way,
But failed to find the treasure anyway.
Since he was doing this continually
Gossip spread in the city critically.

1950

The disclosure of news about the treasure and its reaching the king’s ears.

A group that watched while hiding and found out
Informed the monarch who ruled them with clout:

1955

They told him secretly about the matter:

‘So-and-so found a map for hidden treasure.’

When the fakir heard news had reached the king

He saw no option but surrendering.

Before he should be tortured he went there

And gave the paper to the king with care:

‘Ever since I first found this scrap I’ve not

Found treasure—endless toil has been my lot.

And not one piece of treasure has been found

1960

Though, like a snake, I’ve wriggled much around.

For a whole month I’ve tried resentfully

Believing now that profit’s banned for me.

Perhaps your fortune will disclose it, You

Who win wars and invade the foe’s forts too.’

For more than six months that king tried in vain,

Shooting arrows and digging pits again.

Wherever a strong archer could be found

He gave him arrows to shoot, searched around.

Nothing but grief and futile toil, the same,

1965

Anqaa-like without substance, just a name.

The king despairs of finding the treasure and grows weary of hunting it.

When he met obstacles, too, far and wide

The king got fed up and wished he’d not tried.

Having dug pits in every square yard there,

He threw the scroll at the fakir: ‘Nowhere

Will this bear fruit, so you can keep this scroll—

Since you have no job this suits best your role.

It’s not for someone who has work to do

To burn the rose and keep the thorn in view.

People will rarely keep the vain desire

1970

For grass to grow on iron, and not tire.

For this a tough soul’s the prerequisite—

You have a tough soul and so you suit it.

If you don’t find it, you’ll still not get weary;

And if you do, I’ll let you keep it legally.’

How should reason set off towards despair—

It's love that heedlessly heads over there:

Love doesn't care, but reason will desire

Always the way through which the profit's higher.

The lover's unabashed and he's swashbuckling;

1975

He's like a patient millstone when he's suffering.

Hard-nosed, with no resistance, he has killed

His self and interest in gain that's self-willed.

He gambles all and doesn't seek reward,

Though he receives completely from the Lord.

God gives him his existence without cause;

The chivalrous give it back without cause,

For chivalry's to give without agenda—

Gambling all is beyond all creeds, my brother.

Some creeds seek grace and also one's redemption—

1980

Gamblers self-sacrifice without exception.

They don't test God nor knock on the self's door

Of loss and profit, thoughts of less or more.

*The king gives back the treasure-scroll to the ascetic, saying: 'Take it!
We've had enough of it.'*

When the king gave that tiresome treasure-scroll

To that fakir with a grief-stricken soul

He was secure from foes and went away

To get emotional on his own that day.

Embroided in painful love like dogs that lick

Their own sores by themselves, he was lovesick.

To ease his pain there was none love could send,

1985

And in the village no familiar friend.

No one's more crazy than a lover—listen!

Intellect's deaf and blind to his emotion.

It's not a common madness in this instance—

Medicine cannot give us any guidance.

If a physician gets this madness, then

He'd wash with blood his medical books again.

All intellects got medicine from Him,

All beauties here are simply veils for Him.
Look at your own face now, love's devotee!
Dazzled one, you're your only family.

1990

Then that fakir made his own heart his *qebila*:
*Man has just what he strives for, nothing extra.**

By the time he heard a response, he'd been
Praying for years this way to the Unseen.
Without getting an answer he'd still pray;
He heard from God '*Labbayka!*'* in some way.

Without a drum he'd dance so trustingly,
Depending on God's generosity.

'*Labbayka!*'* then was filling his hope's ear
Although no messengers were even near.
His hope said without tongue: '*Come!*'* none the less—
That call swept from his heart all weariness.

1995

Don't call the pigeon stuck on your roof now!
Drive it off as its wings are stuck somehow!
Hosam, Light of the Truth, drive it away
Since meeting you made its soul grow that way.

Even if you succeed that will not stop
It circling your roof at the very top.

All of its treats are on your roof up there—
Though at the zenith, it's drunk on your snare.

If the soul should deny momentarily
Praise due to you, giver of victory,
Then love's police chief, who can punish best,
Will place a fiery cauldron on its breast,
Telling it: 'Leave that dust, come to the moon!
Love, the Real King, calls you, so go back soon!'

2000

Like pigeons I now flap wings drunkenly
Around the roof and pigeon house I see.

I am love's Gabriel; my Lote Tree is you.
I am infirm—you are my Jesus too.

2005

Make that pearl-filled sea start to surge away!
Ask nicely after this sick one today!
When you become someone's the sea is his.

Though he has crises due to sicknesses.
 This poem's just the wailing he's expressed—
 Be careful with what's hidden still. That's best.
 We have two vocal mouths like reed flutes do:
 One hidden in His lips from others' view.
 One mouth is wailing to You desperately;
 It hollers to the air from what we see,
 But for those men with vision it is clear
 The wail comes from the other realm to here.
 The reed's sounds come from His breath actually,
 The spirit's cries from Him, too, similarly.
 If the reed didn't talk with His lips ever
 It couldn't fill the whole world up with sugar.
 With whom did you sleep and wake up today
 That, ocean-like, you're turbulent today?
 Or did you read '*With my Lord I retire*'*
 And then drive in your heart the sea of fire?
 God's shout, '*O fire, be cool!*'* took on the role
 Of giving its protection to your soul.

2010

2015

O Light of Truth, Hosamoddin, can one
 Really in fact smear mud across the sun?
 Those lumps of mud all aimed to get it done,
 Attempting thus to cover up the sun.
 Rubies in depths of mountains tell of you;
 When filled with you the orchards all bloom too.
 Where's a Rostam to know your bravery
 For me to share grains from your granary?
 When I want to share secrets that you tell
 Like Ali I'll place my head down a well.*
 And since each brother had spite in his breast,
 For Joseph the well's bottom is for best.*
 I have become drunk so I'll start to yell
 And pitch a tent in the plain—what's a well?
 Place in my hand the cup of fiery wine
 And witness drunken glory, friend of mine!
 Tell the fakir to wait without the treasure
 For we're now drowned in syrup without measure!

2020

2025

Seek refuge in God at this time, fakir,
Rather than from one drunk like me now here!
I've no concern for helping any more.

I don't recall myself now any more.
How can there still be care for reputation
With wine that is free from contamination?
Saqi, give him a heavy goblet, please!

From reputation's beard grant him release!
He curls his moustache up contemptuously,
But really tears his beard in jealousy.

He is checkmated by Him. We can tell
Because we know of his pretence so well.

The Master sees in detail vividly
What will come of him in a century.

The Master can see in a brick what you
See in the mirror that is facing you.

What pompous bearded men can't see all day
The beardless one can notice straight away.

You came from fish, so go now to the ocean!

Why have you fallen in the beard like crumbs, son?
You aren't such trash—the pearl feels jealousy.

You do belong with the waves of the sea.
Oneness's sea lacks mates or partners, son—
Pearls and fish there are joined with waves as one.

It is absurd to partner Him thus truly—
Far be it from That Sea and Waves so holy.

In the sea there's no partnership nor twisting,
But what can I say to the squint-eyed? Nothing.

Idolater, we're paired with the squint-eyed

So I must speak like polytheists. We've tried
But Oneness is beyond description's scope—

Words just cause dualism. They can't cope.
Embrace dualism like the squint-eyed do

Or stitch your mouth closed and be silent too!
Or alternate: silence then talking some—

Like squint-eyed people you can beat the drum.
Tell the soul's secret to a friend who's close!

2030

2035

2040

Sing nightingale-like if you see a rose!
When you see water-skins filled with pretension
Seal your lips like a flask for your protection!
Don't move near him—he's water's enemy—
Or else he'll break your flask with idiocy!
Endure the trial of ignorant men nicely
Through intellect that is inspired divinely!
Patience will purify your heart for you—
Enduring the unworthy cleanses you.
Nimrod's fire was for Abraham the cleanser
Because it burnished for him his own mirror.*
Noah's patience with people's unbelief
Scraped clean his spirit's mirror, too, in brief.

2045

2050

*Story about the disciple of Abo l-Hasan Kharaqani.**

A dervish once departed Taleqan
To find Abo l-Hasan in Kharaqan,
Traversing mountains and long valleys, too,
With truthful neediness, to catch a view
Of that great Master. I'll abridge all he
Endured there, though it's worth full sympathy.
Once that young man had finally reached his town
He sought the house of that Shaikh with renown,
Then knocked on his door with respect and care—
That Shaikh's wife looked out to see who was there:
'Good man, what do you want? Speak, go ahead!'
'I have come on a pilgrimage,' he said.
The wife guffawed: 'Ha, ha! Just look at you!
From a long journey with much suffering too!
Back home did you have nothing better really
That you resolved to make a pointless journey?
Was it a sudden longing or did you
Get weary of your homeland that you knew?
Or was it a temptation from the devil
With the suggestion that you should now travel?'
She used unpleasant words and she would swear—

2055

2060

It isn't something that I'd like to share.
That young man grew depressed immediately
Due to her comments and her mockery.

*The new arrival asks the Shaikh's wife: 'Where is the Shaikh? Where shall
I look?' She gives a rude answer.*

While weeping he said, 'Oh well, nonetheless
Where is that sweet-named king of this address?'
'That false impostor,' she began to say,
'The fools' snare, noose for those who've lost their way?

A million naïve ones like you before

2065

Have, due to him, become depraved and more.
If you don't see him and just rush away
That's best, as then you won't be led astray.

Greedy braggart and parasite, he'll blow

His trumpet so all far and wide will know.

This lot are golden calf-admirers—why

Do they caress and worship that, oh why?

Whoever's duped now by this parasite

*Is void by day, a carcass then by night.**

Such men have let go knowledge and perfections

2070

For lies. They claim: "True mystical sensations."

Where now are Moses's kin, who can kill

Calf-worshippers who are existing still?

Those who've abandoned law and piety—

Where's Omar's order to act properly?

For their permissiveness is in the open—

It's an excuse for each corrupted ruffian.

Where is the Prophet's and Companions' way?*

Where's litany and manners, men who pray?'

*The disciple responds and tries to stop the railing woman from her
unbelief and spurious talk.*

The young man shouted, 'That's enough now, please!

2075

Why during daytime bring the night police?

Great men's light spread from East to West such that
The skies became stunned and prostrated flat.
From Aries, Truth's Sun has now risen up—
Our sun through shame donned veils to cover up.
The words of devils such as you will fail
To make me leave here—they're of no avail.
I'm not some cloud blown by the wind down here
To turn back due to dust. That should be clear.'

Idols become the *qebila* with that light,
The Kaaba unbelief without that light.
Permissiveness from lust is dereliction,
Permissiveness from God though is perfection.
Where infinite light has shone we can view
Unbelief's faith, the devil Muslim too.
Man manifests God's might. He's loved by Him;
Man even has surpassed the cherubim.
They bowed to Adam's superiority—*

2080

Husks always bow to kernels similarly.
If you blow on God's candle now, it's known
You and your head will both burn then, you crone.
A dog's mouth can't itself pollute the sea;
One puff can't snuff the sun out obviously.
Even if you just judge by what's outside
What's more clear than this Radiance far and wide?
Appearances next to this one come short—
They're the deficient and defective sort.

2085

If someone tries to blow God's candle out
His mouth will burn, but that will not go out.
Bats like you often dream this world still might
Get orphaned from the sun and its bright light.
The Spirit's Sea's fierce waves are so much more
Than those of Noah's flood were long before.
Hair grew in front of Canaan's eye, so he
Abandoned Noah's ark and chose to flee.
Half a wave swept the mountain where he'd fled,
With Canaan on it, to the pit of dread.

2090

The moon spreads its light and dogs bark at it—

How can dogs feed off its light one small bit?

Why should those travelling with the moon at night

2095

Quit that because some dogs bark at its sight?

The part flies like an arrow to the whole—

Why should it stop for an old hag? The soul

Of faith and goodness is the mystic. Gnosis

Comes from past self-denial and you should know this.

Self-denial means to strive in sowing and

Gnosis is growth of crops across the land.

The body stands for struggle and belief;

Its soul is growth and harvesting, in brief.

The mystic's the command to do what's true

2100

And that true thing too; he reveals truth too

And is that truth revealed, our king all days—

Shells are slaves to his kernel thus always.

Hallaj said, '*I am God!*' and he fulfilled it,

Silencing all the blind who thought he'd willed it.*

Once someone's 'I' becomes effaced, what stays?

Ponder this, you denier of our ways!

If you have eyes, then open them and say

After negation what is left to stay?

May the throat, mouth, and lips of those who'd spit

2105

At both the moon and sky be chopped for it!

No doubt spit will fall back on those who'd try—

Spit cannot find a way up to the sky.

It rains down on them till the end of time

Like on Bu Lahab's soul for his vile crime.*

Banner and drum are both the king's by right—

Only curs call him 'greedy parasite'.

The heavens are slaves to His moon, it's said,

East and West are both asking him for bread.

Since on his signet is '*If not for you*',*

2110

All get his gifts and distribution too:

If he did not exist, then all the heavens

Would lack light, space, and their revolving motions.

The oceans would not then be able to

Cause awe and carry fish and king pearls too;
The ground would not hold treasure under it
And lovely jasmine flowers over it.
He gives provisions and that's what sustains—
The fruits are dry-lipped, waiting for his rains.
Command's knot's back to front now in your view:
Give alms to him who's giving alms to you!
Your silk comes from this 'poor man' and your gold—
Give alms then to the rich—do as you're told!

2115

Then the disciple said, 'His soul's accepted
Yet you, like Noah's wife, have still rejected—
Were you not from this family somehow
I would tear you to pieces here right now.
I've made it so this Noah's free from you,
And later I'll get blessed for what I do.
But I can't show a total brazenness
At the house of this era's king, no less.
Thank God you are this house's dog, secure,
Or I'd have done what should be done for sure.'

2120

*The disciple turns back from the Shaikh's house and asks the people.
They advise, 'The Shaikh has gone to such and such a forest.'*

Afterwards he asked everybody there
And searched so hard for his Shaikh everywhere
Till someone said, 'The *gotb** has just gone out
To find some firewood, for we have run out.'
Then the disciple rushed in hot pursuit
With thoughts as sharp as *Zo'l Faqaar* to boot.
The devil brought to this man's mind so soon
Suggestions that could block with dust the moon:
'Why would this Shaikh choose such an awful wife
To share his home with and spend there his life?
What can these opposites share in the least?
How can this leader live with such a beast?'
He passionately cried then, '*God help me!*
My criticism's infidelity.

2125

Who am I when the Lord is in control

To point out problems when that's not my role?'

Then his self would attack more and restart

2130

For there was smoke now covering his heart.

(Gabriel and demons have no close connection—

How can she share with him a conversation?

Abraham and his father can't unite—*

Can highwaymen join with guides to what's right?)

The disciple attains his wish and meets the Shaikh near the forest.

Riding a lion, that well-known Shaikh came

When he was lost in his own thoughts and shame.

The lion carried firewood on its back—

That blessed Master sat upon the stack.

His whip was a wild serpent as he rode

2135

For he was rare—he used it as a goad.

Know this for sure—it's what you can rely on:

All of the Shaikhs are riding a drunk lion.

Though not perceptible so easily,

It's not concealed from inner eyes that see.

A million lions are beneath their thighs

Carrying firewood, as seen by such eyes.

And God has sometimes made them visible

So ordinary men can see as well.

That king saw the disciple in the distance:

2140

'Don't listen to the devil in this instance!'

This glorious man could read his thoughts inside

Through the heart's light—yes, that is *the best guide*.

This great man told him everything somehow

That had befallen him there up to now,

Then that sweet speaker turned the conversation

To that big issue of his wife's rejection:

'It's not for carnal lust that I endure—

Your self thinks this way, but you must stay sure.

If I had not endured that woman's bother

2145

How would a lion slave for me here, brother?

I'm like a Bactrian camel, drunk and witless,
 Bearing God's panniers as well regardless.
In following commands I am no novice
 To care about the people's mocking malice.
My one concern is His command—that's all.
 My soul runs to Him so fast it might fall!
Single or married? Lust is not a factor.
 My soul's like dice in God's hand which will scatter.
Though I endure that fool's disdain and more
 It's not for sensory pleasures some adore.
This much is something that my students know,
 But how far does my swordplay's reach now go?
To that place beyond place where naught is found
 But God's moon's lightning flashing all around.
Beyond imagining's and conception's sight
 It is the very light of light of light.
I've simplified my speech for comprehension
 So you'll learn to live with a vile companion
And bear the burden with smiles and good cheer,
 Since *patience is the key to joy*. Don't fear!
When you put up with base ones' vileness, you
 Attain light of Mohammad's *sunnah* too.
The prophets suffered much due to the base;
 Such snakes forced them to twist and turn at pace.
God, the Forgiver, in eternity
 Wished to reveal Himself for men to see—
Without its opposite you can't see something
 And there is none to That Incomparable King.'

2150

2155

*The wisdom in 'I'll establish a deputy on earth.'**

Thus God made one with heart His deputy
 To be a mirror for his sovereignty.
He gave him purity that was so boundless
 And made an opposite of Him from darkness.
He made two banners, one black and one white,
 One for the devil, one for Adam's light.

2160

Fighting was started then between these two
And what occurred occurred, as such things do.
In the next era Abel came in sight—

Cain was the opposite of his pure light,
Banners of justice and iniquity

2165

Till Nimrod's time arrived eventually:
He turned into pure Abraham's fierce foe
And those two armies waged war, as you know.
Once He grew tired of its longevity
His fire would settle it eventually.

He made the fire His judge and servant to
Solve all the problems there between these two.

2170

In epoch after epoch these groups warred
Till Pharaoh and kind Moses were on board.

For years a war raged on between these two—
Once it exceeded bounds and tiredness grew

God made sea water His judge to decide
Which of the two were then on the right side—

This carried on until Mohammad's era
And his foe Abu Jahl, that wicked leader.*

He also sent to the Thamud a cry
That was so scary they were bound to die.*

Another servant dealt the Aad a blow—
Such a fast mover that wind which brought woe!

2175

Another one for Korah when they found
Enmity hidden in the lovely ground,

Such that it turned to total wrath and it
Drove Korah and his treasure in a pit.*

Regarding food, which is the body's pillar
Bread is like armour to repel all hunger,
But when God puts His wrath inside that bread
It blocks your gullet and will choke instead.
And clothes that warm you in the cold can be
Given by God frost's temperature—you'd see

The thick coat on your body turn as freezing
As ice or snow according to your feeling,
Until you flee from silk and fur to see

2180

The frost instead is now your sanctuary.
You're not two jarfuls,* only one, and you
Forgot about the tortuous cloud's shade too:*

To towns and villages arrived God's order
For walls and houses: 'Give no shade nor shelter!'
Don't block the rain or sunshine. People then
Rushed to Sho'ayb, the Prophet of these men.
'Have mercy, prince! We almost died,' they said,
Which in the Qur'an's commentary you've read.*

A rod was turned into a serpent once—

2185

That should suffice if you've intelligence.*
You have a view, but you don't deeply know:
Your view's a spring that's frozen and won't flow.
That's why Thought's Cultivator says quite clearly:
'O servant, you need to consider deeply!'
He doesn't mean here: 'Beat cold iron!' Rather,
He orders: 'Follow David, steel, with ardour!
Body dead? Head to Esrafil now, run!

2190

Heart frozen? Go now to the spirit's sun!
You'll be a sophist with bad thoughts within
Because mere fantasy's what you're clothed in,
Denied the kernel, wisdom that is true,
Denied of feelings and existence too.
Watch out, talker! It's time to keep lips closed!
If you tell people, you will be exposed.
What's mindfulness? Unfreezing your own soul—

Once the soul flees the body, it's called 'soul'.
That wise one whose soul fled his body and
Started to wander over grassy land
Gave different names for each soul and its role
To make distinctions—bravo to his soul!
Now we'll show how if someone walks upon
God's order's path he can change rose to thorn.

2195

The miracle of Hud to save the believers in the community when the wind descended.

All the faithful sat in a circle due
To a most devastating wind that blew.
That wind then was the flood, its ark God's grace.
He has so many floods and arks in place.
God makes kings arks for their own citizenry
Since their greed makes them fight the enemy.
The king's aim's not that people feel much better,
But that his kingdom should become a fetter.
The mill's donkey runs to get free from it,
To find a refuge fast from being hit.
Drawing water is not its aim with toil,
Nor turning sesame seeds into oil.
The ox will rush for fear of lashes too
And not to drag the cart ahead for you.
God gave it fear of pain deliberately
For a good outcome's sake eventually.
Shopkeepers work for their own benefit,
Not to improve the outside world one bit.
A balm is sought by each one who is pained;
And this is the way the world is maintained.
God made the pillars of this world from fear
And, due to fear, all live to work down here.
Praise be to God that He made from such fear
The earth's improver and its engineer.
These people fear both good and evil though
They do not fear themselves. They do not know.
The One who rules all in reality
Is close though He can't be sensed noticeably.
He is perceived in a deep, secret place,
But not in this house where you sense no trace.
The sense to which God is revealed, my son,
Is not of this world, but the other one.
If animals' sense could see those forms, then
An ass could be a Bayazid of men!

2200

2205

2210

That One who made the body to display
Each soul and Noah's ark his Boraq, may
Now make an actual ark a flood for you,

2215

O seeker of the light! This is all true.
He has joined ark and flood, O paltry one,
With joy and grief in you. Though it's been done
If you don't see them both in front of you,
Sense your limbs start to shake the way they do!
Since some men's eyes don't see their fear's source, they
Fear all kinds of imaginings today.
A drunk will punch a blind man who starts thinking
That it was really then a camel kicking,
Because he hears right then a camel's cries—
Blind men's ears are their mirror, not their eyes.
Then each says, 'It was a big rock, one found
Under a dome that echoes its loud sound.'
It was not this nor that—He who made fear
Has been displaying all these others here.
Trembling and fear are caused by what's outside—
No one will scare himself, sad man. One tried
To say fear's an imagining—that person
Has wrongly understood this vital lesson.
Imaginings have a reality:
False coins mean there were real ones previously.
Without truth how can any lie have value?
A lie stems from the truth it hides, I tell you:
The liar sees the truth has power, so he
Will spread a lie to gain some personally.
O lie, you are fed by the truth, though lying—
Give thanks for truth's gifts and don't keep denying!

2220

2225

Shall I speak of philosophers and passion
Or now instead of His arks and His ocean?
I choose His arks—heart's counsel is their role.
I speak of the Whole. Parts are in the whole.
Each Saint's its captain, Noah-like. We see
The flood is other people's company.
Don't flee the lion and wild dragon! No!
Beware of family and friends you know!
They waste your time whenever they are present.
You waste time thinking of them when they're absent.

2230

The image of each, like a thirsty donkey,
 Licks thought's sweet drink from funnels of the body,
 And those spies' image has sucked dry the dew
 Which, from life's ocean, had arrived for you.

The sign of branches drying up today
 Is that those branches will no longer sway.
 A free man's limb is a fresh branch—they sway
 When you should pull them this way or that way.
 If you want you can make a basket from them;
 If you want you can make hoops also from them.
 Once sucked dry by their roots, such branches then
 When pulled away will not sway back again.
 Recite now '*They stand languishing*'! * Begin!
 From their roots branches get no medicine.
 Though this example's blazing, I'll stop here
 And go back to the tale of the fakir.

2240

You've seen a fire that burns away a sapling?
 Look at the soul's fire burning each imagining!
 Neither imaginings nor reality
 Next to the soul's fire feel security.
 He is the fox and lion's enemy.
All things must die except His face. * Trust me!
 Become effaced in one of His sides now
 As *alef* gets effaced in *besm* somehow!
 In *besm* the letter *alef*'s hidden well;
 It is in *besm* and it is not as well.
 With all the letters that have an elision
 It is the same way due to their connection.
 It joins together *b* and *s* no less—
Alef can't stay when *b* is joined with *s*. *
 Their union could not bear an extra letter,
 So cutting short this discourse is much better.
 Since *b* and *s* are kept apart this way
 It's better to stay silent, come what may.
 And when the *alef*'s gone the *b* and *s*
 Without it still pronounce it none the less.

2245

2250

‘*You didn’t throw when you threw*’* makes no reference

To him, and ‘*God said*’ comes from his own silence.

While the drug’s separate it makes no improvement—

Once it’s dissolved it can remove the ailment.

And if the pen’s a forest, ink the sea,

2255

They still will not complete *The Masnavi*.

If the Brickmaker’s mould has soil inside

Its verses’ metre will be satisfied—

When no soil’s left and He dries its existence

His sea will foam and make more in that instance.

When forests disappear eventually

Other forests will rise up from the Sea.

Mohammad, the lord of relief, did say:

‘*Share sayings from our sea, a harmless way!*’

Return now from the sea to land and lecture

2260

About toys, since for children that is better.

So that in youth they’ll leave them gradually

And get acquainted then with wisdom’s sea.

The youth finds wisdom through play’s benefit

Though it seems just like wisdom’s opposite.

How can demented children play at all—

One must have reason’s part to reach the whole.

Resumption of the story about the dome and the treasure.

The thought of that fakir who would insist:

‘Come, come!’ makes me unable to resist.

You cannot hear his shouts from over there,

2265

But I’m his confidant, so I’m aware.

Don’t think he just seeks gold! He’s the gold too:

Lovers are also the beloveds too.

He bows down to himself each moment to

See the face in a mirror he can view.

If he should see without imaginings there

A trace, then he would vanish in thin air—

He and his fantasies annihilated

And, in not-knowing, knowing too deflated—

From this not-knowing a new knowledge would

2270

Say '*I am I*'* as only truth then could.

'*Prostrate to Adam!*'* was what they were ordered,

'You're Adam and will see yourselves now mirrored.'

He then cleared cross-eyed vision from their eyes

So that the earth would look just like the skies.

He said, '*There is no God*' and '*Only God*':

Unity bloomed, '*No*' turned to '*Only God*.'*

It's time now for that Friend of God who's dear

To lead me out by pulling on my ear

Towards the fountain: 'Wash your mouth now clean!

2275

Do not divulge what we have kept unseen!'

If you divulge, it won't be shown to you,

Yet you'll be guilty still for wanting to.

But I stay quiet, which could not be clearer—

I am now both the speaker and the hearer.

Speak of the Sufi's form, the treasure's too!

This group love suffering—speak of it, won't you!

For them the fount of comfort is forbidden;

They drink cup after cup of lethal poison.

They've filled their skirts with mud and drag them now

2280

To block those fountains with a dam somehow.

How should this fountain aided by the Sea

Get blocked by people's mud so easily?

'With you I'm closed instead,' the fountain says,

'Without you I'm connected though, always.'

These people have strange appetites, we'd say—

They eat soil and let water flow away.

Their nature is the Prophets' opposite.

They've seen a dragon and are trusting it.

You know God's blindfold*—do you realize

2285

From which things you have actually shut your eyes?

For what have you now opened them to view?

It was *a bad swap* in each way for you.

The Sun of Grace has shone though and it will

Lift their despair away so kindly still.

Kindly He lost in backgammon for you—

From unbelief he's made contrition too.
That Generous One, from people's wretchedness
Has made the springs of love burst forth, no less.
He gives the rosebud gains from thorns, and He
Gives snakestones beauty from snakes marvellously.
He brings forth daytime from the night—He'll bring
Comfort to people who are suffering.
For Abraham He turned to flour mere sand.*
For David mountains joined him like his band: *
The desolate mountain under dark clouds plays
Harp music, both its treble and its bass:
'David, people-shunner, now rise and see—
You've left them and will be paid now by me!'

2290

*The turning of God to that treasure-hunter after he sought excessively
and became helpless and disturbed, praying: 'Lord of Manifesting,
please make this hidden thing manifest!'*

'Knower of secrets,' then the dervish prayed,
'I've sought this treasure pointlessly and strayed.
The demon of lust, greed, and hate did not
Seek patience and calm, which I should have sought.
I haven't gained one morsel from a pot—
My hand turned black, my mouth burned with what's hot.
I've not said to myself since I'm not sure:
"I'll loosen this knot which He made secure."'
Seek from God God's word's own interpretation!
Proud one, do not talk rubbish from opinion!
He tied the knot and He will open it.
He cast the die, so He'll be picking it.
You thought that speech intelligible then—
How can mystic symbols be plain for men?
'O Lord, I have repented!' he'd implore,
'Since You shut it, please *open now the door!*
I need to wear the cloak of poverty—
My prayers lacked merit then admittedly.
What's I, the balanced heart and merit too,

2295

2300

When You exist? They're just reflecting You.
My plans and knowledge each night in my sleep
Become a wave submerged in waves so deep.
Neither merit nor I remain at all—
My clueless body, carcass-like, will fall.'

2305

That Lofty King until dawn will recite
'*Am I not?*' and then '*Yes!*' throughout the night.*
Where is a man to say '*Yes!*' here today?
A whale ate them, a flood swept them away.
When He draws His bejewelled sword in the morning
From its sheath of night's darkness and it's shining
The eastern sun rolls up the night again
And the whale spews out all the eaten men.
Like Jonah, saved from the whale's belly, we
Were sent to scents and colours randomly.
People gave praise like Jonah that they could
Rest in the darkness which they found so good.
Each one will also say at dawn's first light,
Leaving the belly of the whale of night:
'O Noble One, who in that desolate night
Gives mercy's treasure and so much delight,
Due to the dark path-treading, whale-like night
Eyes are both sharp, ears perked and body light.
From frightening positions we can't flee
With someone like You in proximity.
Moses saw it as fire, but it was light.
We deemed black the fair houri-faced true night.
From now on we seek just from You true vision
So sticks and straw will not conceal the Ocean.'

2310

2315

Once Pharaoh's sorcerers again could see
They clapped without hands so amazingly.
Causes become the people's blindfold—you
Aren't one of us if you fear causes too.
Yet God has opened up the door and led
The good to seats of honour there instead.
Through His hand the unworthy and the worthy

2320

Are freed from bondage thanks to His Kind Mercy.
In Non-Existence how could we then merit
Attaining all this knowledge and the spirit?
O You who have made strangers friends with You
And gave to thorns the rose as honour too,
Transfer our dust again, I now implore—

2325

Make nothing into something now once more!
You ordered this prayer too from the beginning—
How could it have been dared by a mere earthling
Without Your order? You did it. Who'd dare?

You ordered it, so answer now this prayer!
Night has wrecked understanding's ship down here;
No hope is left, nor is despair or fear.
God has now carried me to Mercy's Sea.

He'll send me back though after filling me:
He filled one with the Light of Majesty,

2330

The next with images and fantasy.
If by myself I had skills and opinions
They'd be in my control as my possessions.
My consciousness would not leave till I say
At night—my birds would stay in traps this way.
I'd be aware of the soul's stages also

In sleep, unconsciousness, and trials, dear fellow.
He binds and unbinds, making my hands empty—
Where does my self-conceit then come from? Tell me!
I've thought what was seen wasn't seen or real
And picked back up the basket of appeal.

2335

Like *alef* I have naught, O Kind Creator
But a heart smaller than the tiniest letter.*
Alef and *mim* are our own being's *mother*.
The *mim* is small, the *alef* a strong beggar.*
The *alef* that has nought is heedlessness;
The *mim* with narrow heart is rationalness.
I'm nothing when I've lost my wits, but then
I am confused when conscious once again.
Do not place nothing on another nothing!
Do not put fortune's name on a confused thing!

2340

It suits me better to think: 'I have nothing.'

Much grief has come from thinking I have something.
In my possessing naught, You be my owner!

I've suffered so please make my pleasure bigger!
In tears I will stand naked at Your gate

Since I lack vision in my current state—
Give this blind slave's tears verdure now: bestow

On pastures vegetation that will grow!
And if I've no tears left, give me some more

2345

From eyes like our own Prophet's eyes before—
He sought tears from God's generosity

Despite his glory and his majesty.
How should I not weep blood in fine streams then
When I am empty-handed, my good men?
Since such an eye teared up, mine should be bigger,
Tears that are more like an enormous river.

(One drop from those beats hundreds from this river
For he served as Man and Jinn's intercessor.)

When paradise seeks rain then soil has to,
Especially when it's foul and brackish too.

2350

Do not refrain from begging God, my brother,
Whether he should reject or he should answer.
Since food was what had blocked this water, then
You must wash your hands of that bread again.

Make yourself balanced and harmonious—
Cook your food with your tears without a fuss!

A voice calls to the treasure-hunter and informs him of the truth about its secrets.

While thinking of this, inspiration came
And solved these struggles for him all the same:

'He told you: "Load an arrow in the bow!"

2355

He didn't say yet: "Pull the bowstring!" though.
He did not say to draw it, so stay true:
Put it in, but don't try to shoot it too!

You raised the bow in curiosity

And strove thus in the art of archery—
Renounce the skills of archery today

Then shoot the arrow, but not far away!
Wherever it falls, dig there and you'll see!

Quit strength and seek gold with humility!
What's true *is closer than your jugular*,*

2360

But you have shot thought's arrow much too far.
You hunt with bow and arrow in this way:

Your prey is near, but you shoot far away.
The further that one shoots, by that same measure
The further one remains kept from the treasure.'
Philosophers will kill themselves through thinking—

With backs to treasure they just keep on sprinting.
Tell them: 'Run on!' The more they do the further
That they get from their aim, and they won't prosper.

'*Those who strive for us*', once the Prophet said,
Not '*Those who strove to leave us*',* giddy head!

2365

Feeling ashamed of Noah once led Canaan
All the way to the top of a huge mountain.
The more he sought deliverance up there, he
Was distanced more from his own sanctuary.

That dervish every morning tried much harder
With his bow likewise to seek out the treasure:

The harder that he gripped it for success
The more unlucky he grew none the less

In finding it. This story we recall

2370

Holds teachings. Fools don't know pain's worth at all.
The dunces look down on the teachers too

And choose to open up a shop that's new—
That shop above the teacher's head is poison;
It's full of snakes and every kind of scorpion.

Destroy that shop and go back now at pace
Towards the roses, grass, and watering-place,

Unlike proud Canaan, who made stupidly
A mountain his own ark of sanctuary!

His skills in archery veiled him so badly;

2375

What he then sought was in his breast already.

So many sciences and acting clever
Became like raiding monsters for the traveller.
Those heaven-bound are simple usually,
So they'll be spared harms from philosophy.
Strip yourself of all skills and virtue too
So that each moment mercy comes to you!
Cleverness is abasement's opposite,
So settle with being simple and quit it!
Cleverness is a trap before success—
Why should life-gamblers then choose cleverness?
Clever ones are content with made things fully;
Simple ones leave all for the Maker only,
Because the mother holds her baby near
With its small hands and feet when mealtime's here.

2380

The story about three travellers, a Muslim, a Christian, and a Jew, who found food at a house. The Jew and the Christian were already sated and said, 'Let's eat the rest tomorrow!' The Muslim had been fasting and stayed hungry because he was outvoted.

Listen now to a story, son, so you
Won't suffer due to talents you have too!
A Jew, a Christian, and a true believer
Travelled once on a journey all together:
Alongside them the Muslim had to travel
Like wisdom mixed with ego and the devil.
A man from Marw alongside one from Rayy*
Travelled and ate together, as they say.
Crow, owl, and falcon in one cage as well,
Holy and irreligious in one cell.
Easterner, Westerner, and Central Asian
Spend the night at the caravan's same station.
Small and great use the same caravansaray
Because of frost and snow as days pass by,
But once the road's cleared after a few days
They separate and travel separate ways.
King Wisdom breaks the cage and then they fly

2385

2390

In different directions through the sky.
Before this each had spread its wings inside,
Longing for union with its own outside,
Spreading their wings with tears as they would cry
Each moment, but without the space to fly.
They fly with wind once their path out is clear
To what their yearning wings regard as dear;
To that cause of their tears and sighs they flee
Once they have got the opportunity.

2395

(Where did your body's parts come from to bind
Together with parts of a different kind?
Earth, water, wind, and fire; terrestrial
From different realms with the celestial.)
Each had stopped looking for a chance to go
From this waystation due to fear of snow.
Snows show inanimates freeze one by one
In winter's exile from redress's sun,
But when the wrathful sun shines on the land
Mountains become like wool and then like sand.
Heavy, inert things melt with all their parts
Just like the body when the soul departs.

2400

Once the three travellers got to a waystation
Halva was brought by someone with high station.
A kind man brought it to the strangers here—
Halva that's from the kettle of '*I'm near.*'*

The one who hoped for a reward ahead
Brought honey halva with some soft, warm bread.
Knowledge and culture with the citizenry,
Tent-dwellers though show hospitality,
For God has placed being good to visitors
Outside the town among the villagers.

2405

In villages new guests come every day
With none but God to help them on their way.
Such visitors arrive there every night
With none but God as refuge till dawn's light.
The two Non-Muslims ate too much, so they
Felt pain, the Muslim fasted though that day.

At night-prayer's time more halva came and then

2410

He was so hungry, but the other men
Remarked: 'We're full, so let's save this tonight

Until tomorrow when things might be tight—
Let's go without tonight and not eat it

To save it, as tomorrow we'll need it!
'Let's eat tonight!' then the lone Muslim said,
'Leave for tomorrow self-denial instead!'

Those two said, 'Your intention with this call
Is as a ruse so you can eat it all!'

He answered, 'We're three men, my good companions,

2415

So, if we disagree, let's cut three portions—
Whoever wants to eat his, let him do so!

Whoever opts to can wait till tomorrow.'
'Forget the sharing!' they began to yell.
'Your Prophet said: "*The sharer is in hell*"!'

The Muslim said, 'This sharing is abhorred:
Sharing oneself with lust and with the Lord.

You're wholly God's as His own property.
Sharing makes dualists of you and me.'

This lion thus would have prevailed, but then

2420

Was time for wicked curs to lead good men.
Their aim was that the Muslim suffer there
And not have food that night. They didn't care.

Resigned to being outnumbered, he was saying:
'*Companions both in hearing and obeying!*'

They slept all night and then on waking they
Got dressed that morning for another day.

They washed, then brushed their teeth as well while there,
And each then uttered their own kind of prayer.

This took time to do this at their own pace

2425

As they each sought in their own way God's grace.
Jew, Christian, Muslim, Magian worshipping
All with their faces to the Mighty King.

Even soil, water, stone, and massive mountain

Have their own way to God though it stays hidden.
This topic is an endless one. All three

Looked at each other that time amicably.
One of them said, 'Let each of us now share
What we dreamt of last night and thus compare!
Whoever's dream was best can eat the rest:
The beaten's share will now go to the best.'
If one's superior as to wisdom, then
His eating is as much as all the men.
His light-filled soul's supreme when that soul rises;
For others tending to that man suffices.
The wise ones live forever certainly
And so this world lasts in reality.

2430

The Jew related his dream to those two
And where at night his spirit had gone to:
'Moses came to me here most suddenly
Like food in dreams that a starved cat might see.
I followed him to Sinai—in that Light
All three of us had disappeared from sight:
Three shadows wiped out by the sun, no more.
That Light then opened up at once a door.
From that Light's heart a second one shone bright
And wished to rise fast higher than that Light.
Then Moses, Mount Sinai, and also I,
All three were lost in Light that rose so high.
And then I saw the mountain break in three
When God's Light shone on it so powerfully.
When power's attributes were shown to it
It split apart in sheer awe bit by bit.
One piece fell in the sea from that huge mountain—
There bitter water turned to a sweet fountain.
One piece fell on the land that was below—
A healing spring began to gush and flow;
Its water cured the sick at that location
Through grace that came from that blessed revelation.
Another piece fell near the Kaaba's ground
Very close to where Arafat is found.*
When I returned back from unconsciousness
Mount Sinai stood there and was not now less,

2435

2440

2445

Though under Moses it was melting still
Like ice, no longer with a peak or hill.
Terror levelled the mountain to the ground;
Awe brought its peak low, it was so profound.
I came to myself after senses scattered,
Saw Moses and Mount Sinai still unaltered,
And the surrounding desert was filled then
With Moses lookalikes, all of those men!
Their cloaks were like his cloak uncannily
And they all rushed up Sinai happily,
Holding their hands in supplicatory prayer
And singing the song '*Show me!*'* while up there.
But when I came to from the trance again
All of them looked like very different men:
They were Prophets with love so clear to see—
I understood then Prophets' unity.
Most wondrous angels also were on show,
Their splendid bodies all made out of snow.
Some other angels formed a group for prayer—
There bodies were entirely fires that flare.'
That Jew spoke in this way of things so awesome—
Many a Jew has had a righteous outcome.
Don't look down on the infidels, my friend—
They might still die as Muslims in the end.
What do you know about their final day
To turn your face dismissively away?

2450

2455

The Christian then began to speak: 'Last night
In my dream Christ appeared and I took flight
With him to the fourth heaven—that's the one
That is the central home of this world's sun.'
The forts of heaven are a marvellous sort;
One can't compare with them an earthly fort—
'*Pride of the sons*' all men know that the worth
Of heaven's ways surpasses those of earth.

2460

*Story about the camel, ox, and ram. They found a bunch of barley on
their path and each said, 'I'll eat it!'*

An ox, a camel, and a ram one day

While strolling found some barley on their way.

The ram said, 'If we share this and divide

2465

For sure none of us will feel satisfied.

Whoever's older is the more deserving—

Let him eat this as his own single serving!'

Prophet Mohammad had informed us once

That older people should have precedence,

But in this wretched age most in the nations

Let elders go first in two situations:

Either for fine food that is still too hot

Or to cross bridges that might break through rot.

Such men don't serve the great sheikhs here without

2470

A motive that is so corrupt throughout.

That's their good action—what's their evil then?

Tell goodness from the vileness of such men!

Parable

A king was going to the mosque one day.

Mace-bearing guards beat men to clear the way.

Each guard would break the head off of a brother

And also rip the garment of another.

A frightened man got struck ten times that day

For nothing, being told: 'Get out the way!'

Dripping blood, he looked at the king and said:

2475

'Clear cruelty! Why seek hidden kinds instead?

Your going to the mosque is your good deed,

Misguided one? Then what's your evil deed?'

Masters will not hear greetings from base men

Without then suffering harm from those same men.

It's better that a wolf should catch God's Friend

Than evil souls should catch them in the end,

Because, though wolves can cause much harm, we see

They do not have deceit and trickery.
They wouldn't fall in traps if they did—cunning
Reaches its apex in the human being.

2480

The ram said to the ox and camel: 'Now
My friends, since this came to us all somehow,
Let's each tell of our age before we take this—
Elders deserve more; others must accept this.'
'My pasture was back then,' began the ram,
'Where one was sacrificed by Abraham.'
The ox said, 'I'm the oldest actually:
I was with Adam's ox originally—
While ploughing, Adam, Mankind's own forefather,
Made use of me and that ox yoked together.'

2485

On hearing this, the camel was amazed.
It lowered down its head and then it raised
From down below up in the air so quickly,
Without a fuss as well, a bunch of barley.
'I have no need to give a date,' it said,
'Since I've this body and long neck instead.

Your father's darling, it is clear to view
By everyone that I'm not less than you.

Intelligent ones all know of this feature—

2490

My nature is most clearly far superior.
Everyone knows the lofty heavens' worth
Is much more than that of the lowly earth.
How can the vast skies be compared at all
To any parts that are terrestrial?'

*The Muslim answers his companions, the Jew and the Christian, with
what he saw and they become disappointed.*

'O my companions,' then the Muslim said,
'Mohammad, my own Sultan, came instead
And said, "One of them sped to Sinai Mountain
With Moses and then played there love's backgammon.
The blessed Jesus took the other man
To the fourth heaven, as that great one can.

2495

Get up, you who've been wronged and left behind!

Eat up the halva now and never mind!

Those most skilled luminaries have gone ahead

And from both rank and honour's book they've read.

Those two superiors reached their loftiness

And, through their skills, joined angels there, no less.

Simple fool, you've been left behind—beware!

Get up! Sit with the halva over there!”

They answered, ‘Greedy wretch, are you confessing

2500

That you ate all the halva? How amazing!’

‘That king who is obeyed spoke,’ he replied,

‘So who am I that he should be defied?

Would you defy great Moses's words, Jew,

If to good or bad deeds he orders you?

Christian, would you ignore what Jesus says

As orders, whether to good or bad ways?

So how could I defy the Prophets' pride?

I've eaten it and I am satisfied.’

They said, ‘You've had a true dream, so it seems.

2505

That's better than a hundred of our dreams.

Your dream is an awake one, gleeful one,

For its effect is clear in what you've done.’

Abandon efforts, skills, and high position—

What counts is service and good disposition.

God brought us forth for this originally:

*‘I made Mankind so they would worship Me.’**

Did talent help that Sameri before?

It only banished him far from God's door.*

What did Qarun gain by his alchemy?

2510

It took him down to earth's pit miserably.*

Through skills did Abu Jahl find relief?

He went to hell head-first through unbelief.*

True talent means to see the fire directly,

Not saying *‘proof of fire is smoke that I see.’*

O you whose proof, to sages, is more rotten

Than evidence that comes from the physician—

Since it's your only proof, son, you eat shit

And also stare at urine for a bit!
O you whose proof is like a stick you hold,
This just proves that you're blind, if truth be told—
All this fuss, claiming and pomposity
Means only this: 'Excuse me! I can't see.'

2515

The Sayyed of Termez proclaims that he will give anyone who goes to Samarqand in three or four days for an important job robes of honour, horses, slave-boys, slave-girls, and much gold. Dalqak hears of this proclamation while in his village and rushes to the king, but only to say: 'I can't go!'

The clever Dalqak was once the court jester
For Termez's Sayyed, who was their emperor,
And had a vital task in Samarqand
So sought one to fulfil soon his command:
'I'll give a treasure to the person who
Brings news from there in five days, I tell you.'

Dalqak heard this while he was far away,
But rode to Termez from there straight away.

2520

Two of his steeds collapsed most tragically
Because he made them race so rapidly.
Once there, he rushed inside the court too soon,
At a time which was so inopportune.
The court began to fill with whispering
And whispers then annoyed Termez's king:
All and sundry lost peace of mind with wondering
What terrible disaster was occurring:

'A conquering army will attack or maybe
From the Unseen disaster came that's deadly,
Seeing as Dalqak has killed horses to
Come from his village here without ado!'
People came to the palace full of worry,
Wondering: 'Why was he in such a hurry?'

2525

Due to Dalqak's haste and extreme exertion
He started in Termez a loud commotion.

One man was beating his knees, one instead
 Was moaning and lamenting in sheer dread.
 The fear of what's to come, strife and commotion 2530
 Meant each heart followed its imagination.
 Through guesswork each one tried then to work out
 What had caused fire to spark and then spread out.
 Dalqak was given access and he kissed
 The ground. The king asked, 'What is it I've missed?'
 That sour-faced man, whenever asked a question,
 Would say, 'Hush!' so they wouldn't make a mention.
 This habit just increased imagination
 And all were stunned by him in this location.
 At last, Dalqak would gesture as if saying: 2535
 'Let me first catch my breath a moment, great king,
 So I can think again with clarity,
 For a weird state has taken over me.'
 Imagining and doubt in the next hour
 Made the king's mouth, through stress, taste very sour,
 For he'd not seen Dalqak behave this way—
 There wasn't a companion quite as gay:
 Laughing and telling jokes none else could tell,
 Making the king laugh and feel mirth as well.
 He made him laugh so much when they would sit 2540
 He'd have to hold his belly due to it.
 The laughter made him sweat too and he'd fall
 From laughing on his face in front of all,
 Yet he was pale and serious on this day—
 With finger on lips 'Hush!' is what he'd say.
 The king imagined every awful thing
 About chastisements that fate now would bring.
 The king's heart soon filled with anxiety
 As the Khwarazmshah showed enmity.
 That tyrant had killed many rulers there 2545
 By trickery or force—he didn't care.
 Termez's king was worried what's in store
 And Dalqak had made his fears grow some more.
 'Tell us the problem quickly!' he then said,

‘What has disturbed you and filled you with dread?’
‘Our king, I heard back in the countryside
Announced on every main road far and wide:
“I need a man to go to Samarqand
In three days. I’ll reward him—understand
I’ll give him treasure as reward because
This message is for an important cause.”

2550

I hurried here to you in order to
Let you know it is something I can’t do.
I cannot do all this so rapidly,
So don’t hold out hope you can count on me!’
The king said, ‘May your haste be cursed, you moron!

You’ve started in the town so much commotion
Due to just this, you immature fool! You
Have set alight a field in this way too!’

2555

Like those raw ones with drums and flags no less
Who claim: ‘We’ve poverty and nothingness!’
They boast of being masters everywhere,
That they’re like Bayazid. What gall to dare!
And that they’ve reached divine unification—
They open worship circles of pretension
Just like a bridegroom’s house in disarray
When the bride’s family don’t know they’re this way:
They shout out to them, ‘It is half completed.

We’ve finished the requirements that were needed.
We’ve swept and decorated rooms we’ll use.

2560

We’re happy and so keen. This is the news.’
Any reply from the bride’s side then? No!

Any bird come from yonder rooftop? No!
Did any of your letters get replies
From over there? Not one, we can surmise.

‘No, but a friend’s aware and that’s a start.
There always is a path from heart to heart.’
You’ve pinned your hopes on that friend—tell me why
You’ve not received from him a clear reply?

There are a hundred signs, seen or unseen,
But don’t disclose the doorway to this scene!

2565

Return to Dalqak with your story-telling,
The fool who caused self-harm through his own meddling!
The king's vizier said, 'O Truth's Pillar, hear
This from your lowest slave, which makes things clear!
Dalqak came from his village here for something,
But changed his mind once he began regretting.
He wants to make what's ugly now look fair
To thus evade by jesting his own share.
He shows the sheath, but hides the sword, so he
Should now be tortured right here mercilessly.
Until you break a walnut's shell apart
It won't give oil or show to you its heart.
Don't listen to Dalqak's argumentation!
Look at his trembling and his pale complexion!
"Their mark is on their faces," God has said,*
Since that informs a lot and can be read.
His claim's opposed by evidence we see.
Evil can be found in humanity.'

2570

Then Dalqak wailed, 'O dear vizier, don't seek
The blood of this wretch who is very weak!
Fancies and thoughts can come to mind, O leader,
Which are not true, so please hear now this pleader!
And *some suspicion's sin*,* vizier! Be sure
It isn't right to be cruel to the poor.
The king won't harm those he finds irritating,
So why should he harm one who's entertaining?'

2575

The king was very moved by the vizier
To clear up any trickery used here:
'Take that Dalqak to gaol immediately
And do not fall for his false flattery!
Beat him there like a hollow drum until
Just like a drum he lets the whole truth spill!
Dry or wet, full or empty, the drum's sound
Will tell of everything to those around,
So he'll tell us when forced to speak what will
Give hearts peace and leave us all calm and still.

2580

Because the radiant truth gives peace, while lying
Won't calm a heart however much you're trying.'
The heart's a mouth, lies straw blades—we're aware
A man can't ever hide a straw in there:
While it's inside one moves one's tongue away
To get it out of one's mouth in this way.
And when straw's blown by wind inside our eye
It starts to blink and shed tears as we cry—
We'll therefore force this straw out very fast
So mouths and eyes are free and pain won't last.

2585

Dalqak said, 'Please hold on, your majesty!
Don't scratch the face of pardon's clemency!
Why such a rush to punish me at all?
I cannot flee; I'm under your control.
To rush correction is a big mistake
When it is something you do for God's sake.
What's done through rage and a bad disposition
Is rushed so there's no reconciliation
Through fear that rage will be removed by that
And lust for sheer revenge then fall down flat.

2590

False appetite will rush to eat food only
For fear of missing out on it. That's ugly!
But if it's true it's best for good digestion
To wait and thus avoid a complication.
To stop disaster would you choose to hit
Poor me? To find a crack and then fill it
So that disaster won't come through that way?
Fate will bring many more cracks anyway.

2595

You shouldn't try to block with tyranny,
But kindness, pardon, generosity.
The Prophet said, "*Alms will avert disaster:*
Give alms to cure your sick ones, youth, much faster!"
It's not alms-giving to burn someone poor
Or blind forbearance's eye. That's for sure.'
The king said, 'Charity on time is good
But only if you give it where you should.
You shouldn't put the rook in the king's square

2600

Or place the king in the knight's square. Beware!
Giving and holding are in laws of state:
Kings sit on thrones, the horses at the gate.
What's justice? Putting things in their own place.
Injustice? Putting them in the wrong place.
Nothing that God made was in vain—for instance,
Counsel or cunning, rage or kind forbearance.
And none is absolute good. You will see
That none is total evil equally.
Context decides on harm and benefit—
That is why we need knowledge, isn't it?

2605

Many things suffered by the poor instead
Are better than sweet halva and warm bread,
For halva can cause illness frequently
While slaps can purge you of impurity—
Slap the poor man before crimes and this act
Could spare him being beheaded next in fact.
The blow is for bad natures, but the stick
Harms dust and not the cloth where dust lies thick.
Rulers have banquet halls and prisons too,
For the sincere and for the uncouth few.
You use some cream when you should pop a spot,
But that just keeps the pus there, does it not?
It will spread too from there, so what you've done
Will cause more harm than gain for everyone.

2610

Dalqak said, 'I'm not saying: "Let it be!"
I'm saying: "Look into this carefully!"
Do not block patient waiting's proven ways!
Hold off, consider it a few more days!
Through waiting you will find true certainty
Then, with conviction, you can punish me.
Why be *a walker who falls**—that's disaster.
It is more fitting to walk with good posture.
Consult a group of righteous folk! Note well
God told the Prophet once "*Consult!*" as well.
And also "*Their affair's in consultation*",*

2615

2620

Since it reduces errors through opinions.’

Minds are like lamps of light—the more that shine
The brighter light becomes, dear friend of mine.

A lamp among them might have even been

Lit up by Light of Heaven that is seen—

A veil’s been placed there by God’s jealousy,
Mixing the base and lofty so none see.

‘*Travel!*’* God said, so roam the world in seeking

And try your luck—fate might give what you’re needing.

In every gathering seek an intellect

2625

Just like the Prophet’s, one that can detect.

The Prophet just bequeathed that, though it’s rare,

One that can see the Unseen everywhere.

Among such visions always seek the vision

That is beyond this passage’s description.

The Prophet has banned monkery for you

And such retreats on top of mountains too,

So that you don’t miss out on an encounter—

Their glance is fortune, a divine elixir.

One is more pure among the pure ones too—

2630

The Sultan’s seal reveals this man is true.

His prayers are all accepted—there’s no rival:

The best of men and jinn are not his equal.

If sweet or bitter ones start opposition

Their evidence is void in God’s true vision.

God says, ‘Since We have raised him up high, We

Have now removed all argument and plea.’

It was by God the *qebila* was selected

So further argument here is rejected.

Make sure now to shun searching all around

2635

When our true destination has been found.

If for one moment you ignore this *qebila*

You’ll be seduced by void ones, pleasure-seeker.

If you don’t thank the One who gives discernment,

The mind that tells the *qebila* flees that moment.

If you want this barn’s crops and goodness, then

Don’t leave at all the sympathetic men.

The moment you leave your aide you will be
Afflicted by *one who's bad company*.*

Story about the attachment between a frog and a mouse, how they tied their legs together with a long piece of string and how a crow carried away the mouse so the frog was hanging in the air, wailing and regretting its attachment to an animal of a different species instead of one of its own.

A mouse and loyal frog by destiny

2640

Became friends on a riverbank. They'd be
On the same schedule there by hook or crook:
Each morning they would both come to one nook
To play soul's backgammon there with each other
And empty their hearts of distress and bother.
Their meeting made their hearts expand as well:
They told good stories and they listened well.
With and without tongue they'd tell secrets there:
'*Unity is a blessing*'* they could share.
Whenever those two happy ones would meet
They would recall past stories to repeat.

2645

The heart's speech shows your friendship when it flows;
When speech shuts down it shows that you're not close.
Hearts that have seen the sweetheart can't stay bitter;
Nightingales near the rose can't stay mute either.
Through Khezr's pure touch the roasted fish could be
Revived completely and live in the sea.*

When sitting near a dear friend of one's own
A million secrets will become then known:
The close friend's forehead is The Guarded Tablet,
Revealing openly the two worlds' secret.
The close friend guides you through the path ahead:
'*My comrades are stars*,' our own Prophet said.
The star's the guide in seas and desert sands—
Fix your eyes on the star who understands!
Keep your eyes on his face and do not raise

2650

Dust through debate and other things one says,
Since dust can hide the star—the eye is better
Than the tongue which can easily stray and falter.
Let him speak who has Holy Revelation
Which makes dust settle and lacks agitation.

2655

When Adam was love and truth's manifestation
'*He taught the names*'* gave his means of expression.
Reading from the heart's book, his tongue would say
Everything's name as it should be that day.
The tongue divulged, through vision, qualities
And essences of all things that one sees:
Those names that suit the things and fit just right,
Not using 'lion' for a catamite!

Nine hundred years Noah took the true way
And gave a fresh, new sermon every day.
Through the heart's ruby, his lips spoke, no matter
He hadn't read the *Qut* or the *Resaala*.
He never learned from commentaries' explaining,
But from *the spirit* and *fount of unveiling*,
From that wine, which once it's drunk, speech's water
Flows from the mute miraculously thereafter.

2660

The newborn too becomes so eloquent
With wisdom: Jesus set the precedent.*
The mountain which that wine gave speech to could
Give David numerous odes to sing; birds would
Quit all their chirping sounds without ado
To join their voices with King David too.
Don't be surprised that birds get drunk at all
Since even iron heard His order's call.*

2665

The wild wind left all of the Aad men dead;
For Solomon it carried things instead.*
It bore on its head the king's throne each morning
On a month's journey, and on every evening.

It was for him a carrier and spy
Telling of talk by those who weren't nearby:
The wind heard words of people who weren't near
And hurried with them all to that king's ear,

2670

Saying: 'This was said now by so-and-so,
O Solomon, great one, and you should know.'

*The mouse arranged with the frog: 'I can't come with you in the water
when I need to. There needs to be a way for me to contact you when I'm
at the riverbank and for you to contact me when you are coming to the
mouse hole' etc.*

This topic's endless. Once the mouse would say
To the frog: 'Lamp of knowledge, on this day
I want to tell you secrets frequently
While you are in the water far from me.

Out on the riverbank I yell for you,
But in the water you don't have a clue
About this lover's wails. On those occasions,
O brave one, I don't tire of conversations.'

2675

Prayer is for five times daily, I'm aware,
The guide for lovers though is *constant prayer*.
For lovers' hangovers these five aren't cure,
Nor are five hundred thousand to be sure.

'*Visit seldom!*'* is not for lovers—they
Have souls that feel so thirsty every day.

'*Visit seldom!*'* is not for fish—we see
They have no inner joy without the sea.

2680

And what an awesome place is the sea's water—

One gulp can cure the fish's worst hangover.
One moment's parting seems a year to lovers;
A whole year's union's not enough for lovers.

Love is thirsty and seeks the thirsty lover;
Like day and night they always chase each other.

Day is night's lover and in the same way,
If you look, night is more in love with day.

They never have a moment's rest from viewing—
Not for one moment do they stop pursuing:

2685

One grabs the other's foot, and one their ear,
Each one stunned by the other they hold dear.

In the beloved's heart all is the lover:

Waameq's in Azraa's heart always, none other.*

Just the beloved's in the lover's heart—

There's nothing else there to keep them apart.

When these two are like camel bells together

What can 'visit seldom!' mean for each lover?

Can someone 'visit less!'* themselves, my dear,

2690

Or alternate from being far or near?

Intellects can't perceive this oneness, friend.

To understand requires one's life to end,

For if the intellect could sense it, then

Fighting self wouldn't be required of men.

How could the King of Knowledge with His mercy

Say 'Kill yourself!' when it's not necessary?

The mouse begs very desperately and seeks to reunite with the frog in the water.

'O dear, kind friend,' the mouse began to comment,

'Veiled from your face, I cannot rest one moment.

By day you're my light, strength, and means to thrive,

2695

By night my rest and comfort while alive.

How kind it would be for you to please me

If early on and late you think of me.

You've just allotted breakfast time each day

For us to meet, but that's too short I say.

With one occasion I'm not satisfied—

I have become a stranger and won't hide!

I thirst now in my liver so intensely.

Starvation joined with my thirst and it pains me,

But, prince, you're not concerned that I now suffer—

2700

Give alms, rich one, and look now at this pauper!'

Ill-mannered paupers maybe don't deserve that,

Your Universal Grace though is beyond that.

Your Universal Grace requires no aim:

The sun will shine on shit still all the same.

Its light won't suffer loss due to this shit;

The shit gets dried and used for fuel, and it
Gives light to bathhouses, thus helping all
Shining now on the bathhouse door and wall.
It's now adornment, though it once was shit,
But changed once the sun said spells over it.
The sun warmed the whole world's own stomach too,
So earth eats the shit left, to then renew
That as the soil where plants grow—'*in this way*
God will take all the evil acts away.'*

2705

With shit, the worst of things, He's shown successes,
Turning it into sweet brier and narcissus.
Think then how much sweet brier gains from the Lord
Of goodness, loyalty, gifts, and reward!
When He confers such honours on bad things
Think what He'll give beyond here to good things:
God gives then *what no eye has seen*,* a vision
Which is beyond all language and expression.

2705

Who are we? Friend, come to me anyway!
With your good character, light up my day!
Don't view my ugliness! That's a mistake,
Though I am full of venom like a snake.
I am ugly in every way, God knows,
Made first as thorns how can I be a rose?
Bestow the rose's beauty to this thorn!
Give this snake what the peacock boasts! Adorn!
I have the utmost level of true vileness,
Perfect in skill and grace though is Your kindness.
Bring now from that extreme to this one please!
You are the envy of the cypress trees.
Your grace will weep through kindness when I die
Although it has no need at all to cry.
It will sit by my grave a lot, and there
Tears will flow from its fine eyes due to care.
It will lament then so much my exclusion;
It will despair then at my destitution.
Now show a little of that kindness here,
Share words which put a slave's ring on my ear!

2715

2720

Scatter on my perceptions which now grieve
What You would tell my ashes when I leave!

The mouse begs the frog, 'Don't think of excuses and don't delay fulfilling this need of mine.' This is because 'there are harms in delaying' and 'the Sufi is the son of the present moment', and a son does not withdraw his hand from his father's coattail, and the kind father of the Sufi, which is the present moment, does not make him wait until tomorrow, but keeps him absorbed in the rosegarden of his fast response, unlike ordinary people. He does not wait for the future. He is a river, not temporal, for 'neither morning nor evening are with God'. There is no Pre-eternity or Post-eternity there. Adam is not prior to it and the Antichrist is not after it, for these forms are in the realm of the particular and the animal soul only. In the world beyond space and time these forms are not present. Therefore, he is the son of the present moment by which nothing is understood other than the denial of time's division, just as 'God is one' is understood as denial of duality, not the truth of oneness.

A rich lord met a Sufi. He was smug
And asked, 'You whose feet have my soul as rug,
Would you prefer one dirham now from me
Or in the morning to receive then three?'
'I'd have preferred just half back yesterday
Than one today and more on the next day.'

2725

The mouse said, 'One slap now beats more on credit.
I've brought the nape of my neck near, so hit it!
The slap is special when it comes from you—
My nape is drunk on you and the slap too.
O soul of life and numerous worlds, come on,
Take the cash as a gift before it's gone!
Don't turn that moon-like face from the night-traveller!
Don't leave this riverbed, O flowing water!'
Water will make the riverbed soon smile
And jasmines raise their heads there in a while.
When you see verdure on the riverbed

2730

You know that water's there by which it's fed.
'*Their mark is on their faces*',* God explained;
The meadow tells us all that it has rained.
No one will see if it should rain at night
For everyone's asleep and out of sight.
The fair rosegarden's freshness though can tell
The proof of unseen rain last night so well.

'I live on land and you in water, brother.
You're mercy and generosity's king, no matter.
Through gifting and allotment, let me stay
With you both early and late in the day!
Here on the banks I keep on calling you,
I don't hear mercy's answer though from you.
I'm barred from entering in the water too
Because it was from earth my body grew.
I need help from a messenger or sign
For you to know what I shout, friend of mine.'

The two friends then debated more and they
Settled the issue finally in this way:
First, a long piece of string was needed to
Attain, by pulling it, goals for these two:
'One end must be tied to my foot, the other
To your foot,' said the mouse, 'O sweetest brother,
So that we can join through this simple tether
And mix, like body and the soul, together.'

Body's a string on the soul's foot and it
Will drag it down from heaven to earth's pit.
Once the frog-soul escapes the mouse-like body
Into sleep's witlessness, it is then happy.
The mouse-like body pulls it with that string
And that soul suffers much due to that thing.
Were it not for the stupid mouse's dragging
The frog in water would have been relaxing.
You'll hear the rest from The Light-giving Sun
When you arise from slumber, sleepy one.

'Tie one end of the string,' the mouse then said,

2735

2735

2745

‘Right here, the other on your foot instead,
So I can pull you while on land, my friend—
Do you now see my plan’s envisioned end?’
The frog’s heart found this news completely awful:
‘This wretched one will get me in a tangle.’

2750

When good men find that something is repugnant
It’s not without a point; it’s not redundant.
It’s not false intuition, but divine,
And through The Tablet the heart’s light will shine.
That elephant would not approach the Kaaba
Although its ruler shouted, ‘Come!’ in anger.*

The elephant’s legs wouldn’t move ahead
Despite the hard blows it got on its head.
You would have said its legs were paralysed
Or that its soul had just been tranquillized.

2755

But when they turned its face the other way
It raced like horses galloping away.
The elephant could sense the Unseen’s blows—
Imagine what the Friend of God then knows!
Remember Jacob, that pure-natured one:

When Joseph’s brothers asked that, for some fun,
They take him to the country for a bit
If Jacob would permit them doing it,
Saying: ‘Don’t fear that harm might come his way,
Father, let him have a nice break today!

2760

Why not trust us with Joseph, so that he
Can come on this trip with us happily,
So in the fields together we can play?
We can be trusted with the things we say.’

Jacob said, ‘I know that if we’re apart
It will cause pain and sickness in my heart.
My heart will never lie, for it has sight
Illumined by The Heavenly Throne’s Light.’

2765

This was the proof against iniquity,
But he ignored it then through fate’s decree.
That such a sign escaped him was because
Fate then had bigger plans and a true cause.

If blind men fall in pits, that's no surprise;
It is when people fall with seeing eyes.
But fate has many twists before the end:
*'God does what He wills'** is its blindfold, friend.

The heart knows yet does not know of fate's ways—

2770

Its iron turns to seal wax when it says,
As if the heart thinks, 'Since now destiny
Wishes it so, regardless let it be!'

It acts as if it isn't any hassle

And ties its soul to destiny's own shackle.

If mystic greats are checkmated this way

It's just one strike, not checkmate anyway—

One strike saves him from dozens coming after

And one descent takes him up like a ladder.

Wine spared an immature one the hangover

2775

Millions of similar people have to suffer.

He'll be a seasoned master finally,

Escaping this world to be truly free—

He has got drunk with wine that's everlasting;

He has fled creatures and become discerning,

Free from all their blind dogma and illusions

Of their unseeing eyes, and their delusions.

I wonder what can all these men's perception

Do facing waves formed by the traveller's ocean?

These settlements sprung from that desert, then

2780

Vizierates, kingdoms, empires run by men.

To Non-being's desert they come in groups too

Full of yearning all to be seen by you.

Caravan after caravan's arriving

From there both in the morning and the evening

They come and take our places and they say:

'We have arrived for our turn. Go away!'

Once the son's opened wisdom's eye, the father

Puts his own baggage on carts for departure—

Departures and arrivals everywhere,

2785

Some going out, some entering in there.

Look well! We travel as we're sitting too.

Don't you see that we're heading somewhere new?

Your capital's not for the present, friend
 But for your long-term goal found at the end.
 Devotee of the path, the actual traveller
 Who's true heads forward boldly to the future.
 Troops of imaginings come perpetually
 Through the heart without tiring, similarly—
 If all these images aren't from one place 2790
 How do they reach the heart lined up through space?
 Troop after troop from the imaginings' army
 Rush to the heart's spring now because they're thirsty—
 They fill jars then depart continuously,
 Appear then disappear so none can see.
 Compare with heavenly stars thoughts that appear,
 Revolving in another heaven's sphere.
 You have had good luck—give thanks and be generous!
 You have had bad luck—give alms, seek forgiveness!
 Who am I to gain this? King, come my way! 2795
 Make my ascendant positive today!
 With moonbeams please illumine now my spirit!
 The dragon's tail made it dark when it touched it.
 Free it from all imagining and conjecture,
 The well and the rope which are its director,
 So love can make a soul, through your good way,
 Lift wings and fly from water and from clay!
 Poor Joseph's in your well now, O Aziz,*
 Man of your word, will you not help him, please?
 See a dream to release him rapidly— 2800
*God loves those who do good.** Act generously!
 Now seven harmful thin cows will devour
 Seven fat cows, and also at this hour
 Seven rotten corn ears will now feed on
 Seven fresh and delightful ears of corn.
 In Egypt there is famine, O Aziz—
 Heed this and don't permit trials such as these!
 Please let my Joseph now sit in your prison!
 Heed this and save me from the wiles of women!
 My mother's lust first sent me hurtling down 2805

From heaven's safety. God had said '*Fall down!*'*
I fell down from complete perfection, prone,
To the womb's prison through wiles of a crone.
She brings the soul from the Throne to this realm—
The wiles of women are so strong. Fear them!
They caused my first and last fall, everybody—
I was a spirit, then became a body.
Listen to Joseph's cry due to his error,
And pity worried Jacob, Joseph's father!
'Should I blame my own brothers or the women
Who have cast me, like Adam, out of heaven?
I'd eaten wheat from union's paradise—
Now I'm like withered leaves. That was the price.'

2810

Once I saw grace and kindness both in You
Then heard your greetings and Your message too,
I spread rues to ward off its evil spell—
The evil eye got in the rues as well.
Your drunken eyes alone can force away
The evil eye that comes from every way.
Your good eye, King, checkmates the evil eye—
What a superb cure on which we rely!
And alchemy comes from Your eye to make
The evil eye a good eye for our sake.
The king's eye strikes the falcon's heart's own eye
So that its aspiration soars so high.
Due to this glance, that falcon does not fear
To hunt out even lions over here.
The mystic falcon does more—you could say
It hunts You and it is as well Your prey.
Inside faith's meadow spirit's falcon cries:
'*I don't love those that set!*'* towards the skies.
Your infinite pure bounty gave an eye
So the heart's falcon seeking you could fly;
The ear gained hearing, noses sense of smell,
A share for every other sense as well.
You let each sense perceive the Unseen realm
Yet no demise at all is seen in them.

2815

2820

You are the King and give that sense that's key
More than the rest; that sense has sovereignty.

*Story about the burglars whom Sultan Mahmud encountered one night
and told: 'I am one of you', and became informed about them etc.*

One night when Shah Mahmud was wandering 2825

A band of robbers was seen by that king.

They asked him, 'Honest man there, who are you?'

The king said, 'I am one of your kind too.'

'Deceitful men,' said one of the thieves there,

'Let's share our talents, so we're all aware:

Let's each tell others while we're chatting here

The talent we possess, so it is clear!'

Another said, 'O men who show off still,

Within my two ears lies my special skill:

When dogs bark I know what they want to say.'

2830

The others said, 'That's worth some gold today.'

Another said, 'O worshippers of gold,

My skill lies in my eyes, it must be told

That if I see one in the darkest night

I can tell who they are once it is light.'

'Mine is within my arms,' another said,

'I can make tunnels to escape ahead.'

Another said, 'Mine's in my nose. I can

Trace smells better than any other man.

The Prophet said, "*People are mines*", and it

2835

Has been made clear to me why he said it:

Just from soil's smell my nose makes me aware

How much wealth and what kind of mine is there:

In one mine is immeasurable gold, my friend,

Another has less than it needs to spend.

I smell soil like Majnun for Layli's sake*

And then find Layli's soil without mistake.

From every shirt that's brought here I can tell

Whether it's Joseph's or a devil's smell.*

The Prophet caught a scent from Yemen once—*

2840

My nose has its share of that excellence.
I can tell my rich neighbours' soil for sure
From that soil that belongs to those who're poor.'
Another said, 'My hand is special—I
Can hurl a lasso easily so high.
Mohammad's soul hurled a lasso, then found
It took him up to heaven from the ground.
"Lasso-hurler," God told him, "I want you
To know *You did not throw that when you threw.*"'*

The others asked the king, 'Good man, what then
Is your skill that stands out among all men?'
'Mine's in my beard,' the king then told them all,
'From punishments it saves the criminal.
When with the executioner their dire need
Is answered by my beard and they are freed:
Whenever I move my beard in compassion
Immediately they'll halt the execution.'
'You are our master,' they began to say,
'For you will rescue us on our trial's day.'

Together they then started travelling
Towards the palace of that fortunate king,
And when a dog barked from the right-hand side
One said, 'It says: "The sultan's on your side."''
Another smelt the soil and said, 'I see
The house here is a widow's property.'
The other hurled his lasso so that all
Could use it to go over a high wall.

When he smelt soil the other side he said:
'This leads to the king's treasure up ahead.'
Another made a tunnel to reach there;
Each one stole goods stored there without a care—
They took much gold and hid it carefully,
With massive jewels and gold embroidery.
The king now knew where they live, how they look,
Their names, their hideout, and the roads they took.
He left them and went home to keep away.
He told his court what happened the next day.

2845

2850

2855

Officers with hot tempers hurried up
 To seize the robbers and to tie them up.
 They were brought to the palace with hands tied; 2860
 Thinking of death, they trembled, petrified.
 Standing with the king's throne within their sight
 And beaming there their comrade from last night.
 The one who could detect on the next day
 Someone he'd seen at night was blown away—
 He saw the king on the throne: 'If I'm right
 That man sat there was one of us last night.
 That one whose beard has talents which he'd mention
 Caused our arrest through his examination.'
 His eyes could tell it was the king, so he 2865
 Spoke then on gnosis with this company:
 He said, 'It's meant for this king "*He's with you*":
 He saw our deeds and heard our secrets too.
 At night my own eyes recognized his sight
 And made love to his moon-bright face all night.
 I will appeal to him for my men—never
 Does he turn his back on his recognizer.'

 The mystic's eye's salvation for all things,
 And helped Bahram* and his ilk, all the kings.
 Mohammad was the intercessor here— 2870
 Away from God his pure eyes *did not veer*.
 For when the world was veiled in this world's night
 He hoped for God still, keeping him in sight.
 He gained kohl from '*Did we not open*'* and
 He saw what Gabriel couldn't understand.*
 The orphan whom God gives his kohl too can
 Become that sole pearl who guides best, good man.
 Brighter than other pearls' is this one's light
 Because it has this lofty aim in sight.
 He saw *God's servants' stations* and so he 2875
 Was called by God '*a witness*'* consequently.
 The witness has a true tongue and sharp eyes—
 No secret can evade his daybreak rise.
 Though thousands raise their heads to make a claim

The Judge heeds just this witness all the same.
This is how judges do their judging fairly—

Their witness is like two eyes that see clearly.
The latter's words are like the eye's since he
Has seen the truth with impartiality.

False claimants see, but with self-interest's lie—

2880

Desire is the veil over the heart's eye.
God wants your self-denial, so that you
Can quit self-interest, serve as witness too.
Self-interest covers over like a curtain—

It veils your sight, which you should know for certain.
You won't see the full picture, you will find:

*'Your love for things makes you both deaf and blind.'**

Since the sun shone down on his heart its light

He saw no value in the stars at night.

He saw the secrets thus unveiled as well

2885

And paths of faithful one and infidel.

There's naught more hidden than the human spirit

On God's earth and in heaven—you can't see it:

God opened rolled up things across the land,

The spirit though stayed sealed *by God's command.*

That precious eye beheld the spirit, so

Nothing stayed hidden from him that we know.

He's the true witness found for each dispute.

His words cure hangovers. He's absolute.

God is The Witness and He is named Justice—

2890

That's why the Loved One's eye is the just witness.

The heart is where God looks, the only place—

To what He loves the King will turn his face.

God's love for it and all His loving gazing

At beauty is the source of His creating.

That's why Our Beauty-gazer said it too

At his ascension's end: *'If not for you.'**

Fate governs good and evil, and you'll see

The witness governs over destiny:

Destiny's captive will be its commander—

2895

Be happy keen-eyed one! God's your admirer.

The mystic makes requests of Him Who's known:

‘Our Guard in stormy weather when we're prone,
Guiding us in both good and bad times too

Although our hearts remain without a clue,
You *see us though we don't see You* all day—

Our looking blinkers our eyes anyway.
My eye's been chosen over other eyes

To view the sun at night before sunrise.
That's from Your famed grace, Radiant One: *Perfection*
Of virtue is observed in its completion.

2900

In Resurrection make our light complete!
Save us, Lord, from a shattering defeat!

Don't ban Your night companion in the day!
Don't force souls who've seen closely far away!
Absence from You is like death; it is torture,
Especially after union—that's much tougher.

Don't make one who now views you not do so—
Spray water on his verdure! Make it grow!

I've not been unconcerned in journeying,
So don't be unconcerned by injuring!

2905

Don't drive far from Your face that person who
Has once beheld Your face with a close view!

Seeing faces other than Yours is torment:
“*All but God's futile*” is a truthful comment.’

They're futile, but show the right way to you;
The futile just attracts the futile too.

On earth, in heaven, atoms all will bind
As magnets that attract just their own kind.

The belly draws to its last place some bread;
The liver's thirst draws water there instead.

2910

The eye attracts to here a pretty person;
The rose attracts here scents from the rosegarden.

Eyes attract colours and we know as well
The brain and nose attract the sweetest smell.

O Lord, Who knows the secret, by Your Grace
Save us from the attractions in this place!

O Buyer, You rule all attractors, so

You should buy all those stranded here below.
The Night of Power's moon,* like thirsty men
Facing clouds, turned towards the Great King then.' 2915

Since both his soul and tongue belong to Him
The mystic can speak brazenly with Him:
He says, 'We're like the soul that's bound in clay;
You are the Soul's Sun on the Final Day.
The time has come, O King of hidden ways,
To move Your beard so kindly as it sways.
Each one has shown his speciality,
But all of these increased calamity.

Those talents bound our necks—we are brought low 2920
By those attainments that we chose to show.
Talent's *a cord on our neck*,* I'm afraid,
And on the day of death it gives no aid,
Apart from talent of one with sharp sight
Who recognized the Sultan from the night—
Except the sight which saw the King, the others
Were on the road as brigands and as monsters.'

The king felt bad at his court at that meeting
For that one who recalled him from the evening.
The dog who knows The Loving King must be 2925
Called 'dog of the cave'* too, appropriately.

Hearing is a good talent to rely on
Since, through dogs' barking, you'll learn of a lion.
When the dog guards at night it's still aware
Of the night vigils of the king in there.

Those with a bad name aren't for you to chide
Or put to shame—look at their souls inside!
If one has previously got a bad name,
They shouldn't try restoring their good name—
Much gold is made to look black by intention 2930
So it will not be stolen, as prevention.

Story about how the sea cow at night brings up a royal pearl from the depths of the ocean and places it on the shore, then feeds on it thanks to

its radiance, and how the trader comes out of his hiding-place once the sea cow has gone far from the pearl, then covers the pearl with black mud and flees up a tree, and so on to the end of the story.

The sea cow brings a pearl from the sea and
Grazes happily near it on the land
In the pearl's radiance, which shines there so bright
With hyacinth and lily in each bite.
Its excrement is amber—that is due
To eating narcissus and lily too.
Whoever feeds on God's Light's majesty
Will see come from their lips such sorcery.
If given revelation like the bee*
One's house gets filled with honey totally.

2935

That sea cow grazes in the pearl's light, then
It suddenly goes far away again.
Black mud is rubbed on that pearl by a seller
And this brings darkness all across the pasture
The trader very quickly scampers back
Because the horned sea cow will soon attack.
It runs around the meadow to impale
Its foe who's climbed a tree, to no avail.
When it despairs of this it goes back to
The place the pearl was kept to find a clue.
It sees mud on that royal pearl and then
Shuns that dark clay as Satan did with men—
Satan was blind and deaf in the same way.
How could it tell the pearl's just smeared with clay?
'Fall down!'* cast the soul to abasement's snare.
Menstruation excluded it from prayer,
So, friends, beware of chatter you share idly—
Lust is men's menstruation, it's known widely.
'Fall down!'* put soul in body on that day.
Thus Eden's pearl was hidden inside clay.
The sea cow didn't know, unlike the trader.
Mystics can tell, but not a sad clay-digger.
The pearl that's inside one clay clod can tell

2940

2945

The truth about the other clods as well.
Clay lacking light from God's spray can't however
Keep company with pearl-filled clods, and never
Can this big topic end. The mouse is waiting
Next to the river to restart relating:

*Return to the story of that mouse seeking the frog on the riverbank and
pulling the end of the string so the frog in the water becomes aware of its
seeking it.*

That love-formed one would pull the string, inviting 2950
That righteous frog to come back for uniting.
It talked about the heart's string constantly:
‘I've taken hold of the string's end and see
My heart and soul grow thin like that string too
Ever since that string's end emerged in view.’
A black crow swooped down quickly through the air
To hunt the mouse and chase it off from there.
The mouse was carried off then by that crow,
The frog being dragged up there as well in tow,
The mouse in the crow's beak, the frog suspended, 2955
Its foot tied to the string, its life upended.
People asked, ‘How did that crow manage it—
To catch the frog in water then lift it?
How did it go inside the water, then
Grab it as prey and fly away again?’
The frog said, ‘It's deserved by those who falter,
Consorting with base ones by lacking honour.
Beware of the companions who are base!
Seek out some good companions in their place!’

Wisdom feels that the self is a disgrace 2960
Just like an ugly nose on a nice face.
Wisdom would tell the frog: similarity
Is deep within and not just outwardly.
Beware! Don't worship form or try to see
In form the secret of congeniality.
Form is inert like mineral or stone,

Through which congeniality can't be known.

Soul is an ant, body wheat grains: it's clear

The ant is what keeps dragging wheat grains here.

The ant knows that those grains it drags away

2965

Will change to be just like itself one day.

One drags a grain of barley off, while one

Picks up a wheat grain and begins to run.

Barley won't rush to wheat, but ant will go

Towards another ant and this will show

In consequence: when barley moves it's due

To ant returning to an ant it knew.

Don't ask: 'Why did wheat go to barley?' Rather,

Instead of grains, look closely at their carrier!

A black ant walks on black felt: it's not known

2970

The ant is there; grains move as if alone.

The brain tells eyes: 'Look carefully! How can

Grains move without one moving them? None can!'

Grain is form, ant the heart—that is the reason

The dog was in that cave as a companion.*

Jesus goes to the holy ones on high.

Cages vary, but birds as one can fly.

Cages are seen, birds aren't seen even though

Cages move when they move them to and fro.

Blessed is the eye which wisdom's sight has led—

2975

Knowing and calm, it sees what is ahead.

Wisdom tells what is lovely from what's ugly,

Not eyes that see what's black and what's white only.

Eyes get beguiled by dunghills' grass alone.

'Use my touchstone!' says wisdom till it's known.

Eyes that see just desire's goal are birds' bane—

Their saviour that sees traps is in their brain.

Another trap though isn't seen by reason—

To see it came prophetic revelation.

Wisdom can tell true congeniality.

2980

You shouldn't run to forms immediately.

We are the same not due to forms we share—

Jesus, an angel, seemed a man. From there

Gabriel bore him above the heavens though

The way the frog was taken by the crow.

Story about Abd al-Ghaws and his being carried off by fairies and living with them for years, then coming back to his hometown and children, but not being able to stay away from those fairies due to the fact he was one of them inwardly.

Abd al-Ghaws was one of the fairies' own.

For years he'd fly invisibly, unknown.

His wife bore children from another man.

His 'orphans' said 'He's dead and so one can.

Maybe the wolf or highwaymen did it?

2985

Maybe ambushed, falling inside a pit?'

His children grew so busy to survive

They didn't think their father was alive.

After nine years he came back to them, then

A short while later disappeared again—

He was for one month their guest, but no more.

Since then he hasn't been seen any more.

Being a fairy took him far from here:

Soul leaves body when ravaged by a spear.

One meant for paradise needs to suit it.

2990

He worshipped God then, as appropriate.

The Prophet said once: 'Generosity

Hangs down from paradise here', didn't he?

Say that all loves are of the Real Love's sort

And all wraths too belong to God's Wrath's sort.

The reckless join the reckless, you will find—

Their understanding is of the same kind.

Edris belonged with stars and the great spheres;*

He travelled off with Saturn for eight years

In East and West, that planet's close companion

2995

Privy to its effects, in conversation.

When he returned to earth from absence, he

Would keep on teaching men astronomy.

For him the stars arranged themselves so well

And they were present in his class as well—
People could hear their voices magically,
Both the elect and all the ordinary.
Homogeneity brought them down here
And made them talk to help make topics clear:
Each said its name and features eloquently
Then made clear topics in astronomy.
What's homogeneity? A kind of vision
Through which to others' hearts one gains admission:
God gives you the same insight as his, then
You will be his congener among men.
Insight is what draws bodies here and there—
How else then could aware draw unaware?

3000

When God gives woman's nature to a man
He takes it in his arse as such men can.
When God puts in a woman a man's nature
Instead of dildos she seeks women later.
When He puts Gabriel's nature in you, then
You'll try to fly as birds do, unlike men,
Eyes fixed expectantly on the sky and
In love with heaven while displaced on land.
If He gives you a donkey's qualities
With wings you'll seek a stable still. One sees
It's not the mouse's form that makes it low—
Its vileness means birds like to eat it though.
A greedy traitor, she loves darkness—she's
Got drunk now on pistachio and on cheese.

3005

White falcons with the mouse's nature are
Disgraceful to mice and beasts near and far.
Harut's and Marut's* natures were, my son,
Transformed back then into a human one—
From '*We all stand in ranks*'* they both fell down
Into Babylon's pit, tied upside down.
The Guarded Tablet moved far from their vision
And their new source was merely a magician.
With the same figure from limb up to head
Moses is lofty, Pharaoh vile instead.

3010

3015

Sit with good-natured ones, as this soon shows
How rose oil gained its essence from the rose.
Humans give honour to their own graves' land,
So pure ones put on it their head and hand—
Through nearness to the sacred body, it
Has been made noble too and fortunate.
'The neighbour then the house'* itself imparts—
Seek a beloved now if you have hearts!
His bodily clay is similar to his soul—
For eyes of dead ones it's their vision's kohl.
So many who, like dust, in graves are sleeping
Are better than a hundred who are living:
Although their body's gone, they still give shade—
Millions alive receive through them much aid.

3020

*Story about a man who had a stipend from the police inspector of Tabriz
and took out loans in expectation of that stipend unaware of that man's
death. In short, his debt was not paid by any living person, but by that
deceased inspector, as has been said:
'He who died and found peace did not die really
Dead with the living is the dead man really.'*

A certain dervish from outside Tabriz
Fell into debt with its indignities.
A thousand gold coins was his debt. Not far
From his own home lived Badroddin Omar,
Police inspector, heart like a huge sea,
Each hair of whose could house Hatem Ta'i.
(Hatem could not have started to compete—
He would have placed his head on this man's feet.)
If he had given a pure sea to all
Who thirst, he'd have regretted that as small.
If he had made a mote sun-bright, he'd still
Have deemed that too unworthy of his skill.
That dervish came to see him in Tabriz;
To strangers he was like their families.
The visitor knew the way to his door

3025

3030

Since he had had debts paid by him before.
He'd taken new loans, thinking that man would
Pay them off for him, since he was so good.
With loans he'd started acting recklessly
In expectation of that generous sea.
His creditors were bitter; he was joyful,
Laughing like roses grown *among the noble*.
If the sun warms a Bedouin out there,
For Bu Lahab's moustache he has no care.
If you've a pledge from rainclouds, why deny
Water to water-carriers passing by.
Once sorcerers gain knowledge of God's hand
They cannot name their own ones 'foot' or 'hand'.
The fox backed by a lion helpfully
Can break the tiger's skull so fearlessly.

3035

How Ja'far came to seize a fortress alone, and how the king at that
fortress consulted others about repelling him—a vizier told the latter:
'Beware! Surrender and do not be foolhardy, since this man is aided and
endowed by God with a mighty collectedness in his soul.'*

Ja'far went to a fortress on his way.
It seemed one small gulp for his thirst that day.
He rode alone and charged it with such bravery
They locked its gate up so they could breathe safely.
None dared to come and fight, all gripped with fear—
Can boatmen fight a whale that should swim near?
The king asked his vizier, 'What can we do?
Give me advice once you have thought it through!'
'Put pride and cleverness aside, my lord,
And then approach him with a shroud and sword.'
'Isn't he just one man?' the king replied.
'Don't underestimate one man through pride!
Just look around the fortress carefully—
Isn't it trembling now like mercury?
He's seated on his steed such that you'd say
Both East and West are on his side today.'

3040

3045

A few men flung themselves at him outside
Like the Assassins seeking suicide.
He sent them hurtling with his mace's blow
Headlong towards his steed's feet down below.
God gave him such collectedness that he
Could fight a nation single-handedly.

When my eyes saw That Emperor's face shine bright
Plurality then quickly left my sight.

The stars are many, but there's just one sun—

3050

Before it they're extinguished one by one.

If thousands of mice rise up once in anger

The cat does not feel scared of any danger.

How can mere mice advance for an attack

When such collectedness is what they lack?

Collectedness in forms is valueless—

Seek from God for within collectedness!

Collectedness does not need many bodies

(Just based on nothing, like a name, are bodies).

Collectedness inside the hearts of mice

3055

Would lead to angry groups who'd pay the price—

Like suicide assassins they'd attack

The cat and there would be no holding back.

One would tear out that cat's eyes with one smite,

Another its ears with its sharp-toothed bite.

One would then make a gash on its right side—

It wouldn't have a way to flee outside.

The mouse's soul though lacks collectedness—

A cat's meow makes them faint in distress.

Even if in this group they're numerous

3060

The wily cat gives mice paralysis.

Why should a butcher fear a flock of sheep?

How can abundant wakefulness end sleep?

He is the King and gives collectedness

To lions, so they leap on onagers.

Millions of bravest onagers are lacking

When it's the lion who leaps forth attacking.

He Who is King, gives Joseph handsomeness,
So he has the cloud's water's loveliness.

He'll give a cheek the radiance of a star,
So kings become its servant from afar.

3065

Then on another He shines His own light,
So it tells good from bad in the dark night.

Joseph and Moses took from God His Light
For their cheeks, faces, and breasts that shone bright.

Moses' face reflected such bright light

He hung a veil in front to save men's sight
From his bright face, much more than they could take,
Like emeralds that dazzle the deaf snake.

He asked God that the veil become a cover

3070

For that strong light from which none could recover.

God said, 'Make one from clothes, since gnosis's

Clothes are the garments one can trust for this.
That cloak withstands the Soul's Light shining there
So brightly through its warp and woof. Beware,
Only a cloak like that can hold This Light—
Nothing else can endure a light so bright.
If Mount Qaf should attempt at blocking it
Just like Mount Sinai My Light makes it split.'

His Perfect Power lets pure men's bodies bear
That Unconditional Light; others don't dare.

3075

His Power can make glass vessels capable
Though Sinai can't bear one light flash at all.

Lamp, niche and *glass* are where light lives that can
Shatter Mount Qaf and Sinai too, good man.

Their bodies are *the niche*, their souls *the glass*,*

Shining on earth and heaven as they pass—
Their light is stunned by This Light when it's shining:
Theirs vanishes as stars do *in the morning*.*

That Seal of Prophets shared with us this word

3080

From the Eternal, Everlasting Lord:
'Neither earth nor the heavens can contain me,
Nor minds, nor souls, but if you want to see me
In the believer's heart I'm like a guest

Without conditions, pure and loftiest,
So that through that sublime heart's agency
All gain from Me good fates and sovereignty.
Neither heaven nor earth without this mirror
Could bear My beauty's mighty strength and splendour.
I made My mercy's steed race very fast
Everywhere, as My mirror is so vast.
Fifty weddings emerge from it each moment—
Listen to it, but don't ask Me to comment!'

3085

Moses had made his clothes veils for That Light,
Since he saw that moon was so powerfully bright.
If made of something else, not clothes he'd worn,
Though hard as rock that clothing would have torn.
That Light can go through iron walls, no less.
Before God's Light the veil feels helplessness.
That veil began to blaze—cloak of a mystic
Which he'd been wearing while he was ecstatic.

3090

Fire joins with tinder since that is already
Familiar with the fire that burns so fiercely.
Love of that Light of Guidance is what made
Zipporah give her eyes up, though she stayed
At first with one eye shut while gazing on
Moses's light—the eye was thus undone.
She couldn't hold back longer due to love
And used the other for That Moon above.
(Spiritual strivers give bread outwardly,
But give their souls to Light of Piety.)
A woman asked her, 'Dear, do you still grieve
For that narcissus-eye you had to leave?'
'I wish I had a million eyes,' she said,
'To now devote them all to Him instead.
The Moon has smashed the window of my eye
Like treasure in a ruin from the sky—
How can this treasure let a wreck like me
Maintain my porch and house in memory?'

3095

When handsome Joseph's face's light was cast

3100

It shone through mansions' windows as he passed.
 'It's Joseph!' people sat inside would say,
 'He is at this time passing by our way',
 For they would see light rays then flood inside
 And understand this meant he was outside.
 Each house with windows facing that direction
 Would thus be graced by Joseph's stroll's attraction—
 Open a window facing Joseph strolling!
 Take pleasure then in looking through its opening!
 To love means making inner windows bright
 So the Beloved's beauty gives them light—
 Gaze then at the Beloved constantly!
 Friend, listen if you've the capacity!
 Banish thought of other than God today!
 Create inside yourself an open way!
 You have the cure—treat your skin! Heaven knows
 You'll then transform to good friends former foes.
 You'll reach True Beauty when you've handsomeness,
 The One who saves the soul from friendlessness.
 His water gives the spirit's plants relief.
 His breath revives the ones who died of grief.
 Not just the kingdom of this world, one finds
 He gives a million more of other kinds.
 God gave to Joseph dream interpretation
 And beauty, with no need for education.
 The wealth of beauty took him to the prison,
 The wealth of knowledge then took him to Saturn.
 Knowledge and virtue made a king his servant:
 Knowledge is more than beauty—be observant!

3105

3110

*Return to the story about the man who took out a loan and his coming to
 Tabriz in the hope of the favour of the police inspector.*

That stranger felt fear and took to the road
 So he could finally reach *the Peace Abode*.
 Tabriz's rosegarden was the location
 Which made him hopeful for the destination:

3115

There shone from great Tabriz such wondrous lights
Upon his hope, which raised it to new heights.

His soul was smiling at the great men's garden,
Joseph's house and the Egypt of his union.

He said, '*Make my steed kneel, O cameleer!*

My help has come. My need will disappear.

Camel, kneel down! All is well. Kneel down, please!

3120

Leaders always dismount at fair Tabriz.

Graze in the lovely gardens of this place!

Tabriz is for us the best source of grace.

Unload the camels' bundles, cameleer,

In great Tabriz's garden—we've reached here!'

This rosegarden has paradise's splendour;

Tabriz has heaven's radiance. It's a wonder!

Every moment Soul's Light that lifts the spirit

Shines down from heaven to the people in it.

He then sought the inspector. People said:

3125

'Stranger, that man you loved so much is dead.

He left behind this world two days ago.

People are pale with grief here and feel woe.

Heaven's peacock left us all for that sphere

When through the Prophet heaven's scent reached here.

His shade was everybody's sanctuary,

But the sun rolled it up so hurriedly.

He rowed his boat away from this world's shore.

He didn't want this grief house any more.'

The man screamed and fell down, so petrified,

3130

Unconscious, seemingly as if he'd died.

They sprinkled rose water then on his face,

His fellow-travellers weeping for his case.

He stayed unconscious till the night and then

His soul returned to him half-dead again.

The stranger is informed of the inspector's death and begs God for forgiveness for relying on a created being and the gift from a created being, and he remembers how God has blessed him, then he turns to God

*to repent for his sin: ‘Then those who disbelieve consider others His equal.’**

When he woke up he made this supplication:

‘I sinned by pinning hopes on Your creation.
Although the great man had been very generous
It never equalled Your unequalled kindness.

You gave the wise head, he just gave the hat.

3135

He gave a cloak, you the man filling that.
He gave the gold, You gave the hand that counts.

He gave the steed, You the wise man who mounts.
He gave the candle, You the bright eye seeing.

He gave the sweets, You the delight in eating.
While he gave me the wage, You gave life here.

He promised gold, You goodness—that’s more dear.
You gave me earth and heaven, he a house—

A hundred like him thrive inside Your house.
Gold is Yours, that good man did not create it.

3140

Bread is Yours—You sent it and then he ate it.
You gave us sympathy and kindness too.

His joy increased through kindness shown by You.
I made that man my *qebila* then saw later
I’d lost the actual real *qebila*’s Creator.’

Where were we when The Judge on that first day
Put intellect inside our bodily clay,

Made heavens from Non-being and spread out
The carpet of earth where we walk about,

Made lamps out of the stars so brilliantly
And, from the elements, a lock and key.

3145

How much, with or without the visual proof,
Has he brought, from the carpet to its roof!

The astrolabe of attributes is Adam.

The place where the signs too appear is Adam.
Things that are seen in him are His reflection

The way a stream can show the moon’s reflection.
The spider of His astrolabe is there
For His Eternal Attributes—beware!

It's so He'll teach and show to everyone
 The sky of the Unseen, the Spirit's Sun.
 This astrolabe without astronomer
 Falls in the hands of every commoner—
 God gave the Prophets this astronomy;
 An Unseen-seeing eye is necessary.

Generations fell into this world's well:
 Each saw its own reflection in that cell—
 They just saw that, not things beyond that caused it,
 Then like duped lions leapt inside and lost it—
 Know what appears in your well is outside
 Or you're like lions that fell down inside:*

3155

A hare led it astray: 'Lion, come with me!
 Another lion's down this well. Come and see!
 Jump inside and attack him, leave him dead!
 Since you're more powerful, rip off his head!'
 Blind follower, what a humiliation
 Caused by a hare and his imagination!
 It didn't say, 'It isn't really there;
 It's just my trick on you. You're not aware.

You're wrong if you attack an enemy,
 Slave of the six dimensions, and you'll see:
 The enmity in him is God's reflection
 From attributes of wrath of His perfection.
 That sin of his is just the same as yours—
 You need to wash it from yourself of course.

3160

In him your ugly nature came to view—
 He was the mirror's image then of you.
 When you see you are ugly in the mirror
 Don't strike the mirror in wild rage and horror!
 The water shows a lofty star's reflection—
 You throw mud on that through misled perception:
 'This inauspicious star has come,' you say,
 'To drive all my good fortune far away.'
 For the real star you are mistaking it,
 So you pour soil on it to cover it.
 Once the reflection's blocked you feel you've won,

3165

As you believe the actual star has gone.
That inauspicious star is in the sky—
That's where you must correct it, not nearby.
Fix your heart on what is beyond dimensions.
Misfortune here comes from there as reflections.

3170

Recognize gifts as God's gifts and you'll see
Reflections here in multiplicity.
Though base ones' gifts be numerous like sand
When you die they'll be left here from your hand.
How long does a reflection stay in view?
Blind one, see origins to know what's true!

When God bestows on those with neediness
He gives them long life with His gift, no less.

The bounty and receiver *live eternally*,

3175

He will revive the dead so don't now dally!

God's gift is mingled like the soul with you
Such that you are that and that gift's you too.

If bread and water isn't appetizing
Without them he'll give food that's satisfying.

If plumpness left you God gives a new plumpness
From far beyond and hidden inside thinness

The way He gives the fairies food from scent
And angels get, from spirit, nourishment.

Do not depend on this life, for above

3180

Your Lord will make you living through His love.
Ask for that life of love, not this instead!

Seek from Him that provision and not bread!
Creation's like pure water that is clear,

Where God's own attributes can all appear.
Their knowledge, justice, generosity

Are shown in water as stars visually.
Kings are where God's own kingship will reflect,

God's knowledge in the man of intellect.

Generations passed after they all came:

3185

The moon's the moon, but water's not the same.
Justice has not changed, nor has learning, friend,
But centuries and people met their end.

Sir, centuries on centuries have passed,
But these true meanings that endured will last.
The water in the stream has changed a lot,
The moon and stars' reflections though have not.
Therefore the source is not in water, rather
It's in the sky that's far above the river.
These attributes are like the stars one sees:
They're shown in this sphere of realities.
The beauties are the mirror of His beauty:
Love for them is all from love for Him truly.
Cheek and mole go back to their source all over.
Imaginings can't stay as streams forever.
Forms are reflections on the streams you see—
Rub your eyes and discover it's all He.

3190

His wisdom then said, 'Quit squint-eyedness, give up!
Grape syrup's vinegar and that is syrup.
You think he's other than God since you're weak—
Feel shame near him, squint-eyed one, and don't speak!
Do not suppose the other world's Royal Highness
Is the same species as these mice of darkness.
Don't see his body—see his soul alone!
Look at the marrow and not at the bone!
Don't look at that lord with cursed Satan's vision
And then see him as clay with smug derision!*

3195

Don't call him 'bat' when he's the sun's companion
And he has been the object of prostration!
He seems like a reflection, but is not one—
It's God's appearance seeming a reflection.
He saw The Sun, did not stay frozen over—
Rose oil did not seem sesame oil after.
Since God's *Abdals* have been transmuted, they
Aren't creatures after—change your views today!
How can Oneness's *qebala* then be two?

3200

How can mere clay then be prostrated to?*

A man sees apples in the stream, reflected;
That sight leads to the apples being collected—
How can what he saw not be real and true

3205

When what he saw fills many sacks for you?
Shun the body! Don't be *those deaf and dumb!*
*Denying Truth even when it should come.**
The Prophet *did not throw when he once threw:**
See him! It's The Creator whom you'll view.
To serve him is to serve God. That is right:
To see the window is to see the light,
Especially windows which themselves shine bright—
Neither the sun nor stars leave there such light.
Light from That Sun shone on it anyway,
But not in the mundane, established way.
There is a route between the sun and window
Though windows aren't aware. But you should still know
Though many clouds should fill the sky for long
The Wisdom's Light will still stay very strong—
Beyond the six dimensions one can see
Between the two familiarity.
Praising him is like praising God, and you
Will see that fruit grows from the same dish too:
The fruit grows from this dish abundantly;
It wouldn't be wrong if you call it 'tree'.
Call this dish 'apple tree' too, for they say
Between these two there is a hidden way.
The same fruit grows from this dish that you see
Near you as from that great fruit-bearing tree,
So view the dish as fortune's tree, then rest
Under the dish's shade! That's for the best.

3210

3215

If bread gives you the runs, why call it 'bread'?
Call what you ate a laxative instead!
When dust illumines both your heart and soul
Know what it is and deem that dust as kohl.
Since the sun rises over earth, why should
I lift my eyes to a star half as good?
He is effaced. Don't say he has existence!
Can bricks stay dry in streams? Stop your insistence!
How can the new moon shine when the sun's here?
A crone's weak next to Rostam. That is clear.*

3220

God searches and prevails, so that He may

Annihilate existents. Don't you say,

Recognize or exclaim the number 'two'!

3225

Deem slaves effaced in their lord! That's what's true.

The lord is dead and buried and effaced

In his Creator's light. He can't be traced.

If you view him as separate from God, you

Lose both the main text and the preface too.

Let eyes and heart transcend mere bodily clay!

There's just one *qebila*—don't see two today!

You're held back from both sides if you see two:

Flames die on tinder and soon that's gone too.

Parable about the one who sees double like the stranger called 'Omar' in the town of Kashan. Because of his name they passed him from one shop to another, yet he did not understand that all the shops were as one in that they would not sell bread to someone called 'Omar'. He thought, 'I will fix this problem by saying: "I made a mistake; my name is not 'Omar'." When I resolve this in this shop, then I'll get bread from all the shops of this town, but if I leave this shop without resolving it and continue to go by the name "Omar", I will continue to be denied bread, and I would be seeing double for considering all these shops to be separate from each other.'

If in Kashan your name should be Omar

3230

No one will sell bread to you near or far.

When you say, 'I'm Omar. Please let me buy

Some bread from your shop!' Each one will reply:

'Go to that other shop that's very near—

One loaf there's better than five dozen here.'

If that Omar were not squint-eyed, he'd say:

'There is no other store near yours this way.'

Single vision's light then would shine so brightly

On that bread-seller—Omar would be Ali.

But they'll ask the next baker, 'Please now sell

3235

Some bread to this Omar. I bid you well.'

On hearing 'Omar', he holds back the bread

And sends him to a distant shop instead.
'Colleague, give this Omar bread!' he'll then say.
'Tell from my tone what I wish to convey!'
That new shopkeeper moves him on from there:
'Omar has come to get some bread—beware!'

When you are Omar in a Kashan shop
Live without bread while there and simply stop!

But if one says, 'I'm Ali!' at a store

3240

They'll get bread without being hassled more.
The squint-eyed can't enjoy food. Then again
Your case is much worse if you're seeing ten.

Wander squint-eyed in this Kashan of earth

Like Omar, since you're not Ali by birth.
The squint-eyed in this ruined monastery

Say: '*Good is there!*' and chase it constantly.

If you get eyes that recognize God, you

Will see worlds filled with the Loved One in view.
You'll quit being moved from place to place down here
In this Kashan that's filled with hope and fear.

3245

You've seen a bud in the stream or a tree—

Don't think these images are ordinary,
Because through their reflections God's made real
And sells fruit to you—they are not unreal.

This water frees the eye from seeing double:

It sees reflections and the basket both full.

It isn't water, but an orchard really

So don't, like Belqis, strip for splashes quickly!*

The donkeys carry riders' loads today—

3250

Don't beat them with a stick! They'll run away.

One carries pearls and rubies in its load,

Another stones and marble—drop your goad!

Don't do the same with rivers where you see

The moon—don't say it's just imaginary!

This is Khezer's water, not of beasts, my friend!

What you see there is real, so comprehend!

The moon says, 'I'm the moon' from its depth—listen!

‘I talk and travel. I’m no mere reflection.’
Whatever comes from yonder to this river
Get it from here or from beyond, whichever!
It’s not like other rivers, no not nearly—
The moon-faced one’s ray is the moon too really.
This topic’s endless: that poor debtor cried
Because he heard his benefactor died.

3255

*The bailiff seeks payments throughout the city of Tabriz, but only collects
a little, and that stranger goes to visit the inspector’s tomb and tell this
story at his graveside as a lamentation etc.*

His debt acquired soon notoriety.
The bailiff too felt his anxiety.
He sought from all around some contributions,
Telling the story to get more donations.
That beggar didn’t get a lot this way,
Less than one hundred dinars on that day.
The bailiff took his hand and led him to
That generous and kind man’s grave, which he knew.
‘When someone gets God’s favour,’ he said then,
‘By hosting someone blessed among the men,
And sacrificing his own wealth for him,
And giving up his status too for him,
To thank him is to thank God certainly,
Since God made him behave so generously.
To not thank him is to not thank God too—
His right is linked with God’s right over you.
Always thank God for bounties gratefully!
Remember and thank your lord constantly!
From God, too, is a mother’s tenderness,
Still you must serve her also nonetheless.
God said ‘*Bless him!*’* and this too was appropriate—
The world’s affairs were given to the Prophet.
On Judgement Day God will be asking you:
‘What did you do for what I then gave you?’
‘I thanked you, Lord, from my soul’s depth,’ you’ll say,

3260

3265

3270

‘Since You were my provisions’ source each day.’
‘You didn’t thank Me. That’s not what you’ve done,
Because you didn’t thank that generous one.
You were unjust to someone generous, though
My bounty comes through his hand down below.’

He went to the grave of that saint who’d died
And there began lamenting as he cried:
‘Refuge and help for noble men,’ he prayed,
‘The wayfarer’s true source of hope and aid,
You who cared much about our poor condition,
Whose generous kindness was like God’s provision,
O guardian and friend of the poor, whose aid
Makes sure their debts and taxes all get paid,
Who, like the sea, gives pearls to those who’re near,
And rain as gift to those who’re far from here,
O sun who warms our backs up, and the splendour
Of every palace and each ruin’s treasure,
Whose brow has not been knotted in our view—

3275

You’re generous like the Angel Michael too.
Your heart’s connected to the Unseen’s ocean,
The Anqaa of pure kindness’s Qaf mountain,
“How much of my wealth went?” you’d never question,
None passed the ceiling of your aspiration,
You to whom I and hundreds just like me
Became like your own children frequently,
Our wealth, our furniture, our property,
Our fortune, fame, and our prosperity!
You never died, our fortune did instead.

3280

Our pleasure and full sustenance are dead,
One like a thousand in war and kind, giving
Like scores of Hatems in your gift-bestowing:
Hatem bestows dead things on all the dead,
Thus giving walnuts only—you instead
Give every moment new life that’s so dear
It cannot be contained in life’s breath here.
You’re giving everlasting life as treasure,
Gold that won’t lose its worth, exceeding measure.

3285

No heir to any of your dispositions,
The heavens all prostrate to your directions.
Your grace guides people from pain like a shepherd
Like Moses whom God gave speech that was inward.'

3290

One time a sheep fled Moses, running off.
Moses's feet got blistered, shoes slipped off
While chasing that sheep until it was night
And then the whole flock vanished from his sight.

The sheep grew weak and tired, so Moses shook
The dust off its fleece in a quiet nook,
Massaging both its head and back with care,
Caressing like its mother over there,

No anger in him, for he gave forgiveness,
Nothing but love and tears of tender kindness.

3295

'I know you didn't care for me,' he said,
'But why are you mean to yourself instead?'

God told the angels right then: 'So and so
Is fit for Prophethood now you should know.'

Mohammad said, 'All Prophets in their childhood
Have herded sheep.' In his words there's no falsehood.

Without the shepherding test, God would not
Have given leadership to be their lot.

Someone asked, 'You as well, O champion?' 'Yes!
'I once worked as a shepherd here, no less.'

3300

God made them shepherds prior to Prophethood
So all could see their patience was so good.

Each one who shepherds humans in a way
That it is only God whom they obey

Shows Moses's forbearance, shepherding
With wisdom and the foresight of a king.

Spiritual shepherding then God bestows

Beyond the moon's orb where none of you goes,
As he raised Prophets through this one vocation

3305

So they would shepherd perfectly each great one.

'Great lord, through shepherding you've made your foe,
Who hates you, blind with envy—don't you know?

I know that God bestows there as reward
Eternal leadership for you, dear lord.
In the hope of your generosity
Giving a stipend and discharging me
I borrowed recklessly much gold, but where
Are you now dregs need clearing up from there?
If only you would say now smilingly:
“Take ten times that amount at once from me!”
If only you would make me smile anew
With kindness like the lords’, but where are you?
If here you’d take me to your treasury
And make me safe from debt and poverty.
I would say, “That’s enough!” repeatedly,
But you’d say, “Take this too!” so generously.
Inside a body can worlds be contained.
And on the ground can a sky be restrained?
You are beyond this world as well somehow,
Both in your whole life that’s ahead and now.

3310

3315

A bird is flying in the Unseen’s air,
Its shadow falling on land under there.
Body is far from heart, so far apart—
How can it share the high rank of the heart?
A man sleeps in pyjamas—while he lies
His spirit is like sunshine in the skies.
His soul is hidden like the inner lining;
Under the sheets his body is seen rolling.
*Spirit’s from God’s command** and out of view,
So each comparison’s negation too.
Where are the sugar-holding lips of yours,
Your sweet replies and secrets your heart stores,
Cornelian mouth that chews cane sugar too,
The problem-solving key that’s held by you?
Where is that breath like Zo’l-Faqaar’s that’s able
To make our intellects become unstable?
How long like doves that seek their nest will you
Keep crying out, “Where are you?” and “Coo, coo!”*
Where is he? In the home of deep compassion,

3320

3325

Power, transcendence, and the true perception,
Forever in that place of heart and mind

Like lions in the jungles, you will find.
That place where every man and woman's hope
Turns to when sad and feeling they can't cope,
And where in times of sickness their eyes flew
In hope of their health being restored anew,
That place, where to stop ugliness prevailing
You seek wind to aid sowing and boats' sailing,
That place to which the heart points openly,

3330

Where the tongue cried aloud, 'O He! O He!'
He is *with God always*, so won't ask 'Where?'
Would that, like weavers, I asked 'Where?' back there.*
Where's wisdom to perceive soul's East and West
And flash a hundred bright lights on the rest?
His ebb and flow came to here from an ocean—
The flow remains, but the ebb ceased its motion.

He said, 'I owe nine thousand, but can't pay.
I have one hundred left as of today.

God pulled you far away and I stay here
Suffering despair, O you whose dust stays dear.

3335

Keep your support for this one who is suffering,
You whose help, face and hands are of a great king!
I came to the spring and all springs' source—there
I found blood, but no water anywhere.

It's the same sky, but not the same moon beam,
Not the same water though it's the same stream.
There are good ones, but where's that godliest one?

There are stars here, but where now is the sun?
You went to God, respected sir, so I
Will also go to God, though I must die.'

3340

God's at *the meeting place* for all of us
*Under His flag: 'All are brought here to us.'**
Images, though they do not understand,
Are present always in the painter's hand.
Each breath That Traceless One paints and erases

On the page of their inner thoughts—He raises
 Anger and takes contentment now, then He
 Brings meanness and takes generosity.
 Not for a moment, by day, in the evening,
 Am I free from this painting and deleting.
 The potter works with the pot, it's well known:
 The pot can't make itself tall on its own.
 How then can wood be carved without the hand
 Of a skilled carpenter who'll saw and sand?
 The tailor handles garments that you own
 Or else they would not get superbly sewn.
 The water-carrier holds the flask, good men—
 How else will it get empty, full again?
 You fill then empty out each moment, so
 You're also in His crafting hands, you know,
 And when the blindfold falls off finally
 You'll be stunned by the Craftsman totally.
 Look with your own eye if you have an eye,
 Not with a clueless fool's! Why even try?
 If you've an ear, use your ear now to hear!
 Why be indebted to the idiot's ear?
 Master vision without blind imitation
 And contemplate with your own contemplation!

3345

3350

The Khwarazmshah sees on his travels an exceptional horse in his
 cavalcade and his heart becomes smitten by the beauty and fineness of
 that horse, but the Emad al-Molk* puts the king's heart off the horse. The
 king chooses the latter's words over his own vision, as Hakim Sana'i said
 in his Elahinama:**

*'When envy's tongue becomes the dealer, then
 For mere cloth you'll buy Joseph among men.'*

*Due to Joseph's brothers' envious dealing, even such immense beauty
 was veiled from the buyers' hearts and he seemed ugly to them for 'they
 placed little value on him'.**

Once an emir had a fine horse with none
 Like it among the Sultan's group, not one.

3355

He rode at dawn with the whole company.

The Khwarazmshah saw it suddenly.

Its beauty and its colour caught his eye.

Till they got back he watched it like a spy.

Whichever limb his gaze fell on looked better

And finer than the one he had seen prior.

God gave it beauty, elegance, and spirit

And such fine attributes you could see in it.

The king's mind tried to work out then in vain

3360

What it was that had overpowered his brain:

'My eyes have no need, sated by this sight—

It has two hundred suns' light it's so bright.

The rooks of other kings seemed pawns I shunned,

But now a horse leaves me completely stunned!

Witchcraft's Creator put a spell on me—

It's that pull, not the horse's quality.'

He said prayers and The Fateha* at the start,

Which just increased the pain inside his heart,

Because The Fateha* pulled him on that day—

3365

Uniquely it can pull and push away.

Other than Him is an illusory view

And when it vanishes He's waking you.

The king was certain then God was attracting—

Every second such wonders come from That King.

And God's deception also makes you prone

To worship some mere animals of stone.

To infidels the idol has no peer

Though it lacks depth and value to be dear.

What's the attractor, hidden from this sphere,

3370

Shining down from the world that's far from here?

The intellect is veiled, the spirit too

From this ambush. I can't see it. Can you?

The Khwarazmshah came back and conferred

With his own special friends whom he preferred.

He ordered then his colonels to bring back

That horse from its home and fulfil his lack.

That group arrived as fire spreads, rapidly.

The strong emir felt helpless tragically.
 Through feeling cheated he then nearly died. 3375
 Emad al-Molk was the sole friend he tried.
 Emad al-Molk was then the refuge best
 For those who suffered and all the depressed.
 There was no leader more respected then;
 To the king like a prophet among men.
 Devout, true, and without lust's cravings, he
 Was much more generous than Hatem Ta'i.
 His judgement was wise and his vision clear,
 His every wish judicious to all here.
 Generous with wealth and spirit to each one, 3380
 Like the new moon he sought the Unseen's Sun.
 Feeling strange being emir so modestly,
 He had love in him and humility.
 To every needy one just like a father,
 Before the Sultan their own intercessor.
 He covered what's bad like God's clemency,
 Opposite of the others inwardly.
 He'd often go up mountains, it is known—
 The Sultan pleaded he not go alone.
 The Sultan would feel small near him though he 3385
 Intercedes for much sin continually.
 The man went to Emad al-Molk, the noble,
 Took his cap off and got down to be humble:
 'Let him take my harem and property,
 And robbers swipe my earnings too from me,
 But that horse my soul loves—I won't recover
 If he takes it, O goodness's true lover!
 I know if he should take this horse from me
 I cannot keep on living. Please help me!
 Since God gave you a link to Him, Messiah, 3390
 Rub my head with your hand that can calm fire.
 Gold, palaces and women all can go—
 I can't cope and I don't pose just for show!
 Test me if you are not believing me,
 In word and actions, then you'll clearly see!'

Then the Emad al-Molk dried up each eye,
 Ran, agitated, to the king, to try:
 With closed lips he stood there before him—he
 Would be conversing with God secretly.
 He heard what the king privately was saying 3395
 While deep within he also then was praying:
 ‘O God, if that young man goes the wrong way,
 You’ll be his only refuge, come what may!
 You act as You should wish, and please don’t blame him
 Although he asks one bound like me to save him,
 Because each of them is a needy person
 From the poor beggar to the mighty sultan!’
 Seeking guidance from candles when the sun
 Is present is a very similar one.
 Seeking light from a lamp is equally 3400
 When here the sun is present beautifully—
 Neglect of manners and good attitude,
 Acting from lust and sheer ingratitude.
 Most minds are bats in thinking all the same—
 They love the darkness and deserve the blame.
 If the bat eats a worm at night, that one
 Has its life nurtured still then by The Sun;
 If the bat gets drunk eating that worm, then
 It is The Sun that moves the worm again,
 That Sun from Whom light radiates for free, 3405
 Providing even for Its enemy.
 The royal falcon’s different totally
 To bats—its eyes see so perceptively,
 But if, like bats, it seeks through night improvement.
 The sun will box its ears hard in chastisement,
 Saying: ‘The bat has problems that I knew,
 But you do not, so what is wrong with you?
 I will chastise you strongly—when I’m done
 You won’t again turn your face from the sun.’

How truthful Joseph was imprisoned for a number of years because of his seeking help from other than God and asking: ‘Mention me in your lord’s

Like Joseph asking once a prisoner 3410
Who was so needy and thus similar,
Saying: 'When you get out, your life will then
Improve much under that king of your men—
Please go before him there and mention me
So he might free me from captivity!'
(How can a prisoner help another one
Get out of prison too? This can't be done.
All people here are captives, all of them
Waiting for their deaths in this transient realm,
Except for that rare one whose body's captive 3415
But whose soul is like Saturn, so expansive.)
For seeing him as a facilitator
Joseph then stayed in gaol until much later:
The devil would take Joseph from his memory
And from his heart those words were gone completely—
Due to this sin from one with piety
The Judge kept him more in captivity.
The Judge said, 'What did Justice's Sun do
For you to fall, like bats, in darkness too?
What did the sea and cloud do wrong that now 3420
You've asked sand and mirage to help somehow?
The vulgar are like bats in nature, yes—
Joseph, you have the falcon's eye, no less.
If the bat errs, that's no surprise, but why
A falcon who has seen the sultan? Why?'
The Teacher punished him for this and said:
'Don't make supports from rotten wood instead!'
But He filled Joseph's heart with Himself, so
Imprisonment would not make it feel woe.
God gave such drunkenness and also closeness 3425
That he felt neither prison nor its darkness.
The womb's the scariest of gaols—it's full
Of blood, unclean, dark, and so miserable.
Once God should open windows to His side

You'll grow each moment in the womb. Inside
A wondrous savour that's beyond compare
Makes senses blossom from your body there.

Leaving the womb is rough for you—you flee
Towards the back through pubic hairs you see.

The way of savour's travelling inwardly,
While seeking palaces is idiocy.

One is elated in a mosque's small corner,
Another in the orchard feels so bitter.

The palace is nought—wreck the body, friend!
Treasures are found in ruins in the end.

Don't you see that at the wine-drinking party
Only once wrecked do drunkards feel so happy?

Although the house is full of pictures, raze it,
And with the treasure you find, then repair it!

(A house filled with forms from imagination
That veil you from the treasure of true union.)

Real Treasures' brightness and gold's gleam will start
To cause new forms to surge inside the heart.

Due to Pure Water's grace and Its reflection
On Water's surface, foam veils It from vision:

It's due to grace and fervour of the spirit
That body forms the spirit's veil worn on it.

Listen to the new adage common now:

'What comes upon us is from us somehow.'
The thirsty who love forms, due to this veil,
Go far from water and will always trail.

'Though we have you as *qebila*, Sun, and Guide,
We worship as bats,' Emad al-Molk cried.

'Make these bats fly to you and set them free
From their bat nature too, O Sanctuary!

Though this young man has sinned and gone astray
By coming to me, please don't make him pay!'

Emad al-Molk's thoughts roamed as in a jungle.
The lion makes the other beasts all tremble.

Outwardly stood before the kingdom's sultan

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His spirit soared inside the Unseen's garden.
Drunk like the angels in *Alast*'s great realm,
Each moment he'd drink more and feel like them.
Merry inside while sad on the outside,
Body a tomb with joyfulness inside.
Mesmerized and stood waiting to be seen
And witness what would show from the Unseen.
The colonels led the horse in from a distance
Close to the Khwarazmshah's august presence.
Under the blue sky there was none one could
Compare to its fine form that was so good:
Its colour drew all eyes, its beauty frightening—
'Welcome, horse born of the bright moon and lightning!'
It moved fast like the moon and Mercury,
Feeding on fierce winds, not grains most would see.
The moon can cross the sky in just one night
During one orbit as it spreads its light.
The moon in one night crosses the whole sky
And yet the *me'raaj* you would still deny?*

3450

That pearl is like a hundred moons, so bright.
The moon split when his signal came in sight.*
That marvel he showed by then splitting it
Fitted each man's perceptions seeing it.
The work of all the Prophets and their actions
Are far beyond the stars and all the heavens.
You, go beyond the heavens' great revolving
And then look at the work that they are doing!
Inside the egg like chicks, you're not aware
Of birds that praise God while up in the air.
It's not the time for miracles, my friend.

3455

The Khwarazmshah and horse tale needs to end.
When God's Grace shines on something, it of course
Gains the Cave's glory, whether dog or horse.*
His Grace's radiance isn't even though—
Ruby and pebble's shares are high and low:
Ruby becomes a treasure that's so bright,
Pebble gets hotter with a bit more light.

3460

Light falling on a wall one can't compare
With that on water, shimmering with its share.

The horse left the king stunned and then he turned
To the Emad al-Molk, told what he'd learned:

'Minister, what a beauty of great worth!

Surely it is from heaven and not earth!'

'O ruler,' the Emad al-Molk then said,

'Your love makes demons angels too instead:

Whatever you look at becomes exquisite—

This steed is handsome, but there is a limit.

Its head's big for its body. What a blemish!

More like an ox's head, not one to cherish.'

The words transformed the Khwarazmshah's heart—

The horse lost all worth to him for a start.

When it's self-interest that dictates the deal

You can buy Joseph for some cloth—a steal!

When it's the moment for the soul to go

The devil sells faith's pearl for something low,

Then the fool sells his faith with so much haste

For just a jug of water. What a waste!

And that's a phantom, not a real jug either.

Tearing apart is the aim of that dealer.

Now you are healthy and robust, yet give up

The Truth for a mere phantom that is made up.

You're selling special pearls each moment here

And, like boys, buying walnuts you deem dear.

It won't be strange then if you act this way

At the trial on the Final Judgement Day.

You have concocted it as fantasy—

When rattled like nuts you're known easily.

The phantom is at first like the full moon,

But in the end it's just like the new moon—

Deem its last state as its reality

Then you'll be free from its cheap trickery.

The world's a rotten walnut, trusty man—

Don't test it! Watch from distance if you can!

The king looked at the horse from this day's lens,

3465

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But the Emad al-Molk looked from its ends.
The king's distorted eyes saw two yards only,
The eyes that see the outcome though saw forty.
What kohl does God apply that lets the spirit
See guidance beyond veils that would conceal it.
The Prophet's eyes could see the end in store
Then called this world 'a carcass nothing more'.

3485

The king heard criticism—his love then
For that desired horse left his heart again.
He'd chosen the Emad al-Molk's strange view,
Abandoning his own and being duped too.
That was a pretext—The Unique Judge had,
Due to his prayer, made the horse seem so bad
He shut his eyes to beauty with him standing—
Those words were like a door that was then slamming
Just made to veil the king, who would turn back,
A veil which even makes the moon look black.

3490

The Builder in the Unseen Realm is pure—
From speech and spells He builds forts, so secure.
Speech is the door to mystery that is sounding—
Is it its opening's sound now or its shutting?
The door's sound's heard, the door's beyond. Once more
You sense the sound, but *you don't see** the door.

When wisdom's harp plays tunes that are so nice
Which door is opened up to paradise?

When evil's speech gets louder can you tell
Which door is opened to the fires of hell?

3495

Far from the door, now listen to its sound!
Happy are those whose vision is made sound!

When you do a nice deed and are aware
You feel alive with comfort that's so rare.

However, when a bad deed comes from you
Vitality and savour vanish too.

Don't give up your own view due to the base—
Those vultures lead you to the carcass place.
You closed your sound eye to ask, 'Who is it?

3500

I'm blind, so take my stick and lead with it!
The guide you've chosen for the journey though
Is blinder than you—if you'd look you'd know.
Grasp *God's rope** like a blind one with no vision,
Follow God's order and His prohibition!
What's *God's rope*?* Giving up desires completely
Desire was wind that for the Aad blew fiercely.
Due to desire the gaol holds men inside.

Due to desire the bird has its wings tied,
And fish get fried in pans above a fire,
Shame leaves the modest too due to desire.

3505

Police rage is one of desire's hot sparks,
Gallows and crucifixions are its marks.
You've seen police for bodies and their role
On earth—now see police meant for the soul!
In the Unseen there's torture for the spirit,
But it is hidden till you flee and reach it.
Once you have fled you will then see the torture
Because all opposites reveal each other.

One born in a well lives in ignorance
About the meadow and its difference.

3510

Through fear of God, renounce lust and then thrive—
Jars from God's fount in heaven will arrive.
Don't journey with your lust—ask God the way
To paradise's Salsabil* today!
Do not obey lust like a weed that's flimsy!
The Throne's shade's better than the world's shade clearly.

The Shah said, 'Take the horse back! I retract.
Release me quickly now from this wrong act!'

The Shah did not say inwardly instead:

3515

'Don't trick this lion with the ox's head!
You drag in ox legs to deceive of course—
God doesn't put ox horns upon a horse.'
This Famous Builder builds appropriately:
An ox's part on a horse—how could He?
He has built bodies perfectly before
As well as mighty fortresses galore,

With vestibules and cisterns too inside

Joining from one side to the other side.

An endless world within—such a great place!

3520

Even though a small tent, there's so much space!

He makes the moon seem nightmarish to you,

He makes the well's pit a lush garden too.

The heart's eye's opening, closing constantly,

Awe from God doing thus His sorcery.

That's why the Prophet asked God: 'Please won't you

Let ugly ones look ugly, true ones true,

So when You finally turn the page tomorrow

I won't fall into agony from sorrow!'

The King of Kings had guided to His plan

3525

The great Emad al-Molk, a special man.

God's trickery is the source of trickery here

'*The heart's between two fingers*'*—it's that clear.

He who puts in your heart such tricks can also

Set trickery's cloth on fire, and I have said so!

*Return to the story of the bailiff and the debtor from another town, how
they returned from the Khwaja's* grave and how the bailiff saw the
Khwaja in a dream etc.*

This story's endless, but there is no room.

When the stranger came back from the lord's tomb

The bailiff took him to his own house and

Put a full purse of gold coins in his hand.

He brought him snacks and told him stories too,

3530

So in his heart a thousand flowers grew.

He told him '*after hardship ease*'* at last,

Which he'd experienced also in the past.

Midnight passed and, while still relating after,

Sleep then transported them to the soul's pasture.

The bailiff dreamt he saw the Khwaja there

Inside a palace on a special chair,

And he told him, 'Nice bailiff, I have heard

Everything that you mentioned, every word,

But I've not been commanded yet to answer
And cannot say a word without that order.
Now we've learnt of degrees and of conditions
Our lips are sealed to any expositions,
Just so the Unseen's secrets aren't revealed—
So livelihoods aren't ruined it's concealed,
So negligence's cure is not complete,
So the trial's pot is not yet cooked with heat.
We are all ear—ear's form is deaf somehow.
We are all mouths—our mouths are mute for now.
We see all that we've given vividly—
This world's a veil, that one's reality.
Sowing's day is concealment's day, we've found,
And when the seed is scattered on the ground
The time of reaping with the scythe will be
Reward Day and when Truth's shown publicly.'

The lord tells the bailiff in his dream the way to pay off the loan of that friend who had come to him, shows the spot where the money was buried, and sends a message to his heirs that they should not see it as being too much and try to withhold it, and that even if he were to refuse all or part of it, they must leave it there so anyone who wants it can take it, 'for I have made promises to God that not one tiny bit of that money shall come back to me and those related to me.'

The lord said, 'Here's my guest's gift that I'm giving:

I foresaw that he would be soon arriving
And heard about debts on what he'd been loaned,
So packed two or three jewels that I owned,
To cover that debt and leave an excess,
So that my guest should not feel more distress.

3545

He owes nine thousand pieces of gold still—
Let him pay what these jewels can fulfil!
And what's left over he'll be free to spend.
Just mention me to God in your prayers, friend!

I wanted to give him it personally.

I've made a note of it officially.
Death didn't give the opportunity
To hand him Aden's rare pearls secretly.

Rubies to pay his debt are in a pot
With his name on it, since this is his lot.

3550

I buried it beneath a vault, you know.
I've felt sad for my friend since long ago.
Only kings know its value—*strive while selling*
Not to be cheated! This is what I'm telling:

When you fear being swindled choose the ways
The Prophet taught: a trial for three days.

Don't worry it will lose its value then—

Demand for it will not decline again.
Send greetings to my heirs! On my decision
Advise them on all this with fine precision,
So lots of gold does not cause them to doubt,
Then hand it to my guest, being calm throughout!

If he should say, “I don’t want so much!” Tell him:

“Give it to those whom you wish to on your whim!

I won’t take any back of what’s bestowed:

Milk won’t return to nipples once it’s flowed.

The Prophet said on one who took gifts back:

“*Like dogs who eat their vomit.*” Don’t take back!

If he refuses and slams shut his door

3560

Have it poured outside that door on the floor—

Whoever passes can take gold from there.

Good men don’t take their gifts back, I declare.

I’ve saved it just for him for two years now

And to the Glorious God I’ve made a vow.

If men let themselves take some, let them count

Since they’ll lose twenty times that same amount!

And if they vex my spirit anymore

A hundred trials will open up their door.

I trust in God that He will let each man

3565

Receive what is due to him, since He can.’

He then explained two other issues, but

I won’t mention them now. They have been cut.

Those topics will stay secret—that’s not wrong.

The Masnavi will not then stretch too long.

He leapt up from sleep, snapping then his fingers,

Sharing some ghazals and laments like singers.

The debtor asked, ‘What is this ecstasy?

Bailiff, you’ve risen drunk so merrily!

What did you dream last night that now you rise?

3570

City and desert can’t contain your size.

Your elephant has dreamed of India—

Since you’ve fled your own friends, it’s similar.’

He said, ‘I had a crazy dream—I’d view

A sun inside my heart. I swear it’s true!

I dreamt I saw that same lord waking up,

That one who for true vision gave life up.

I dreamt of him who gives what’s sought by men—

He’s one man, but more than a thousand men.’

Drunken, beside himself, he spoke this way

3575

Till drunkenness stole all his wits away.
He then fell flat in front of him, right there—
A large crowd gathered round once made aware.
When he came to he said, ‘O Sea of bliss,
You who put our wits into witlessness!
You have put wakefulness in sleep—no wonder
You can put a beloved in the lover.
In poverty you hide wealth secretly;
You tie wealth’s necklace under poverty.

Opposite in its opposite from You,
A fire within the boiling water too;
A garden inside Nimrod’s fires which roar
And income that grows out of spending more,
Such that it was once stated by the Prophet:
*“O wealthy people, kindness is your profit.
Wealth’s never been reduced by charity—
Giving alms makes you wealthy actually.”*

3580

Almsgiving makes one’s gold increase, while prayer
Increases goodness, so please be aware.
Zakat’s the keeper of your purse for you;
And prayer protects from wolves as shepherds do.
Fruit’s hidden by the branches and the leaves,
Eternal life by death, though someone grieves.
Dung nourishes the soil we plough and hoe
And on that soil we see fruit start to grow—
A being hidden in non-being till later,
What’s worshipped in the worshipper’s own nature.
Iron and flint are both dark outwardly—

3585

They are a candle’s light though actually.
Many securities are in a fear;
In the black pupil light makes vision clear.
A prince inside the cow-like body frame,
Treasure placed in a ruin just the same.
That old ass Satan would flee treasure though,
Seeing just cattle, no prince he could know.

3590

Story about that king who advised his own three sons: 'In this journey through my kingdom put things in order in a certain place and appoint deputies in a certain place, but for God's sake don't go to such and such fortress or its environs!'

There was a king with three sons, I heard once,
And each had vision and intelligence,
Each better than the rest in bravery
As well as kindness and sheer majesty.
The lights of his eyes, those three princes stood
Before their father, for his soul like food:
The father's tree drew water, you could say,
From their eyes' fountains through a hidden way.
While water flows from the son's special fountain
Towards the father and the mother's garden
It will stay fresh and every plant will grow,
And fountains from those special two will flow.
When sickness ails the fountain, branches dry
On palm trees where leaves wither then and die.
His palm tree's withering tells everyone
About the need for moisture from the son.

3595

3600

So many hidden channels, heedless one,
Are joined to your souls, but what have you done?
From earth and heaven you've drawn food like that
Just so your outward body should grow fat.
The body comes from this world's parts, and it
Gets torn by this and that too, bit by bit.
From earth and sun and sky the parts are sewn
Onto body and soul, like garments worn.
You reckon you've got it for free, don't you
And this and that won't take it back from you?
Stolen goods do not last forever, fellows,
But only take the thief straight to the gallows.
It's just a loan—don't wear it out with pressure!
What you took must be paid back soon in measure
Except '*I breathed*'* from God. You should remain
Joined with the spirit, for all else is vain.

3605

I say they're vain next to the spirit, though
He made them so robustly, which does show.

*Explanation of the mystic's seeking God from the Fount of Eternal Life
and his becoming free from the need to seek help and draw from the
founts of unreliable waters, the sign of which is withdrawal from the
abode of delusion. When a man relies on aid from those founts he
slackens in his search for the Eternal and Lasting Fount.*

*An action from your soul is necessary
From loaned things no door opens suddenly.
A spring of water that is found inside
Is better than a river found outside.*

How good the channel is that's source of all!

3610

It makes you free from other channels' thrall.

Though from a hundred fountains you are drinking

When one is emptied then your joy starts shrinking.

When the Sublime Fount gushes from inside

You don't need others to be satisfied.

Since *your eyes'* joy still comes from clay and water

The recompense will soon be heartache's torture.

When water comes from outside it is plenty

While in the fort in pleasant times of safety,

But when the enemy is all around

3615

Thirsting for blood in which you'll all get drowned,

They'll cut the water off, so you will be

Lacking a comfortable, safe sanctuary—

At that time a mere briny well inside

Is better than a hundred seas outside.

Death's troops and the grim-reaper come, remember,

To cut all leaves from branches in December—

No help from Spring then in that desperate place,

The soul though has Spring of the Loved One's face.

The earth is called '*Place of delusion*' sadly,

3620

Because it leaves *the day you need her badly*.

Before that she is rushing here and there,

Saying, 'I'll heal your pain.' She doesn't care.
In times of grief she'd say, 'May pain now leave you
And then stay with ten mountains in between you!' 3625
But when pain's army comes she doesn't speak,
Not even to say, 'I've seen.' Not a squeak.
God told a parable on Satan: 'See,
He brings you to war using trickery,
Saying, "I'll help you—I am on your side."
I'll run first to the danger that's outside
As shield against the arrows that they fire,
Your refuge too when things get very dire.
Of course, I'll sacrifice myself for you.
Be valiant! You're a lion, Rostam too!"
Through wiliness, that bag of trickery
Will lead you down to infidelity.'
When someone falls inside a trench, this foe
Opens his mouth to laugh at him below:
'I need your help! Hey, come!' the man might say, 3630
But Satan says, 'I'm quit of you today.'
You didn't fear the Maker's justice here.
Keep your hands off me! I know who to fear.'
God said, 'He's parted from all pieties.
You can't be rescued by his falsities.'

The bugger and the buggered, come what may,
Will be disgraced and stoned on Judgement Day.
The robber and the robbed, by God's decree,
Fall into being apart's pit certainly.
The ghoul and those he's fooled with trickery 3635
Will be denied relief and victory.
The ass is in the mud and the ass-hunter
Heedless of God and sinking there together.
All but those who should turn round from this place
And leave the fall for the True Spring of Grace,
Repenters whose plan God accepts—They're actors
On His command: '*He's the best of commanders.*'
The highest heaven quakes at *sinner's* groans,
When, due to their regret, each of them moans,

Shaking as mothers do for children and

3640

Drawing them up once they have grabbed their hand,
Saying: 'You whom God has saved from delusion,
Look at Forgiving God and Grace's Garden!
You now have sustenance forever after
From God's air and not merely from the gutter.'
Those thirsty as fish leave their flasks behind—
No mediators in this sea, you'll find.

The princes, after saying 'Goodbye!' to the king, travel through his kingdom, and the king repeats this advice when they say 'Goodbye!' etc.

Those three sons set off for their father's realm

Equipped for travel, as was fit for them,
To tour the cities and the fortresses
For management and checking finances.

3645

They kissed the king's hand when they said, 'Farewell!'

That king, whom all obeyed, told them, 'Heed well:
Follow your heart wherever it leads you
With God's protection, waving joyfully too,
Apart from to that fort called "Thief of reason";
It makes the noble suffer much—use caution!
Avoid that fort though it has been adorned!
For God's sake fear the danger—you've been warned!

Its towers, front and back, from roof to floor,

3650

Are all adorned with pictures men adore.'

Zolaykha's room had portraits of her too

Compelling Joseph to keep her in view.
Since Joseph wouldn't look at her, by cunning
She put them every side he would be turning,
So he would be compelled to see her face
Whichever way he turned once in that place.

For mystics God has made all the dimensions

As places for His signs' manifestations,

So any plant or animal you view

3655

You'll then feed off His Beauty's meadow too.
That's why He told his special group, with care:

*‘Whichever way you turn His face is there.’**

If you drink down a glass from thirst, you’re also

Viewing God in the water that you swallow—

In that same water he who’s not a lover

Sees his own image only, you’ll discover.

The lover’s form has been effaced completely

In Him, so what will he see in it? Tell me!

They see God’s beauty in the houri’s face

3660

Just like the moon in water. That’s God’s Grace

And jealous hold of truthful lovers too,

Not for the devil or beasts, though it’s true

If he becomes a lover he has won—

He’s Gabriel and his devil nature’s gone:

‘The devil turned believer’, as Yazid

Can be changed through His grace to Bayazid.*

He said, ‘O sons, this discourse could be endless—

Protect your faces well then from that fortress!

Don’t let desire waylay you or you’ll be

3665

Living in everlasting misery!

Avoiding danger is compulsory—

Hear selfless and wise counsel now from me!

Sharp wits are best for keeping safe, you know—

Best to avoid the ambush-place of woe!’

If he’d not given his sons then this lecture

And warned them of the fortress’s real danger,

They would not have gone near it, nor would they

Have ever been inclined to head that way,

Since it was very far and not well-known,

3670

Remote from other forts and pathways shown,

But their hearts lusted after it instead

And fantasized because of what he’d said.

Their hearts now craved so much to understand

The mystery of that place that had been banned.

Which man once he has been forbidden something

Will then refrain when men all crave the banned thing?

Forbidding makes the pious shun that option

While it stirs lustful men into distraction.
Like this He leads so many men astray
While also guiding wise hearts the right way.
Doves don't flee whistles that they recognize,
But any dove new to them swiftly flies.

3675

The princes told him, 'We'll serve you each way.
We hear your every word and we obey.
We won't shun your command, your royal highness.
It's unbelief to ignore your kindness.'
But due to too much self-conceit, they still
Would not praise God or say 'If God should will.'
We mentioned why it's a necessity

3680

At the beginning of *The Masnavi*.^{*}
Although one hundred books, they're just one chapter,
Many directions, but there's just one *qebila*.
There's only one house where all the roads lead.
Thousands of flowers all come from one seed.
A million sorts of food men are consuming
Are ultimately all the very same thing:
When you find one completely satisfying
The other hundreds don't seem appetizing.
Hunger makes you squint-eyed and then you'll see
One as a million very easily.

3685

We told you of the slave-girl, who was ailing,
And the physicians whose know-how was failing,^{*}
Just like unbridled horses, heedless and
Not joined with their own rider's firm command,
Mouths covered with sores from the bit inside,
Hooves wounded by the pace and change of stride,
Not realizing: 'On our backs now sit
Great trainers who are masterful at it.
The bit is not what turns our heads at all,
But the successful rider's firm control.'
We entered in the garden for a rose—

3690

It was a thorn, though we did not suppose
That we should wisely ask at first: 'Who's that
Kicking our throats? What is he aiming at?'

And those physicians were all slaves of reasoning
Through causes merely, veiled from God's own scheming.

If you leave in a stall your ox, then find
A donkey is all that's been left behind,

It would be asinine not to ask then

3695

Who'd done this secretly of all the men.

You never asked, 'Who changed them at the stall?

Not obvious, is it then celestial?'

You've shot an arrow to the right ahead

Yet seen it go toward the left instead.

You have been hunting deer along the way

Yet turned yourself into a mere hog's prey!

You've chased more profits out of lust—you failed!

The profit didn't reach you. You've been jailed.

You've dug pits too for others to fall in,

3700

But now instead of them you've fallen in.

God has denied to you the means—won't you

Now feel suspicious of its value too?

Many people through toil became an emperor,

Others, through that same toil, found helpless hunger.

Many have been made rich because of marriage,

Many were bankrupted as well by marriage.

The means spins like a donkey's tail—it's better

Not to rely on it at all, no matter.

Don't use the means without fear and precaution!

3705

Problems are hidden under it—take caution!

'If God wills' means you've acted prudently,

Since He makes donkeys seem goats easily—

Though he whose eyes get blocked be clever too,

Donkey is goat still in his cross-eyed view.

God is the changer of eyes, so who should

Be turner of our hearts and thoughts for good?

You see as a fine house the pit down there;

You see as lovely seed what's in a snare.

It is God's changing and not sophistry—

3710

He's showing you The True Reality.

One who denies all such realities

Is living totally in fantasies.
He won't think: 'Deeming all as fantasy
Is fantasy itself.' Rub eyes to see!

*The king's sons go to that forbidden fortress because humans crave what
they are forbidden:*

*We worked as servants to give you a notice,
Bad nature could not gain though from such service.*

*They trampled on all their father's advice and instructions, so they fell
into the pit of tribulation and their reproaching souls told them: 'Did not
a warner come?'* They said, weeping and regretful: 'If we had listened
and used our brains we wouldn't have become hellfire's residents.'**

This discourse has no end, but I'll report
That group of princes set off for that fort,
For that forbidden fruit's tree, going out
From the safe shelter of all the devout.
Their father's ban had made them more keen to
Head for that dangerous fort to get a view.
Despite the chosen king's words, they at once
Went to that fort that kills intelligence.

3715

Despite the counsel of the intellect,
On a dark night they shunned day, to inspect
That pretty fort with pictures close at hand,
Its five gates to the sea, five to the land,
Five like the world's smells and its colours' senses,
Five like the mystery-seeking inner senses.

Due to thousands of pictures found inside,
Giddy and drunk they walked in side-by-side.

3720

Don't get drunk on such pictures' cups, my brothers!
Don't worship idols or be idol-carvers!
Leave now the cup of pictures, friend of mine!

The cup is not the source, but there is wine—
For the wine-giver open your mouth wide!
When wine comes that cup will have some inside.

'Adam, seek My Reality!' God said,
'Leave that forbidden fruit's mere husk instead!'

For Abraham sand turned to flour through Grace,*
So wheat was something He could thus replace.
Form comes here from the Formless: in this way
Smoke is produced by fire here every day.

3725

The slightest blemish in a form you see
Becomes vile when it's looked at constantly,
But Formlessness will leave you mesmerized
And from beyond tools come tools you have prized.
Handlessness is now weaving hands for you,
The Soul of Souls makes human beings' forms too.
And images are woven in the heart

3730

From union and as well from being apart.
Does cause look like effect and does lamenting
Resemble the bereavement when it's happening?
Lamenting has a form, bereavement's formless—
Men gnaw their hands due to a loss that's handleless.
Friend, this comparison won't really fit.

It's an attempt by one too weak for it.
The Formless sows form's seed, and then one sees

Bodies grow senses and their faculties
Which afterwards, whatever they may be,

3735

Lead them to good and evil that we see.
Bounty's form leads to gratitude they're blessed,
Delay's form leads to patience with the test.
Blessing's form will cause what is blessed to grow
And moans will come from the form of a blow.

A city's form will lead to travel there;
A shield? Some arrows flying through the air.

The form of pretty ones means a fun treat,

The Unseen's form leads you to a retreat.
Want's form will lead to earning a good wage,
While power's form will lead to people's rage.

3740

Imaginings and special calls to action
Are numerous, beyond our calculation.
The endless paths and occupations too
Are shadows of the form of thoughts in you.

On the roof's edge the happy ones are found—

Observe each person's shadow on the ground!

Thought's form is on the raised roof there, you know,

Actions its shadow pillars show below;

Actions are pillars, thought concealed, yet they

Join through cause and effect's chain anyway.

Form of the banquet's wine jug equally

Will cause unconsciousness and ecstasy.

The form of sex and play between two partners

In union will give both orgasmic raptures.

God's Bounty in the form of salt and bread

Results in strength that's formless though well-fed.

In war the sword and shield's forms will lead to

A formless triumph from what fighters do.

Schools and the kinds of learning that they spread

Expire once knowledge is found in your head.

Forms are slaves of The Formless, so it's odd

That they deny still The Bestowing God.

Forms' beings come too from The Formless, so

Why then deny Him Who gave being below?

And one's denial comes from His benefaction—

This action is naught else but a reflection.

The forms of walls and ceilings over you

Are shadows of the architect's thoughts too,

Despite the fact in thought's location there

Is no brick, wood, or stone found anywhere.

The Actor God is formless certainly;

Form is a tool in His hand fittingly.

Concealed in Non-Being, That One who is formless

Shows His face to the forms because He's generous,

So each form can get aid from Him that hour

Of His perfection, handsomeness, and power.

And when He hides His form again, they then

Start begging in the transient realm again.

If one form seeks perfection from another

The is the essence of being lost. Don't bother!

So why present your need to someone who

3745

3750

3755

3760

Is also in need just as much as you?
Since forms are slaves to God, don't ever claim
God has a form when He is not the same!
Seek Him through self-effacement, to be naught,
For nothing but form is produced by thought.
If you can only gain from forms, it's best
They're born within, but not at your behest:
If the form of a town you wish to visit
A formless craving is what draws you to it.
You'll go to Placelessness then actually—
Joy is beyond both time and place, you see.
If the form of a friend you'd visit there,
You go for this dear friendship that you share—
Really you go towards the formless, though
You don't know your real goal while here below.
Therefore all worship God here ultimately
And this path helps you taste reality.
However, some will face the tail instead
And lose track of the aim which lies ahead.
The head regardless gives all those astray
Headship's gift through the tail in its own way:
Some get it from the tail, some from the head;
Others lose hands and feet—they're far ahead—
Since all has been lost, they have thus gained all;
Through this loss they have sped towards the Whole.

3765

3770

*In this fort's pavilion adorned with pictures they see the portrait of the
daughter of the king of China and all three lose their wits, become
agitated, and ask, 'Whose portrait is this?'*

This topic has no end. That group then saw
A gorgeous portrait which inspired their awe.
They'd seen more gorgeous portraits previously,
But this one plunged them into a deep sea:
Some opium reached them in this cup so full—
The opium unseen, the cup visible.
The fort called 'reason's robber', as was fit,

3775

Did its job, hurling them to trouble's pit.
Flirting can pierce the heart without a bow—
Have mercy, Merciful One, since You know!
Stone forms burned generations—they would start
A fire inside their faith and in their heart.

When it is spiritual imagine how

3780

More powerful its flirting will be now!
Love for the portrait stabbed each prince's heart
Just like a spear and this made each prince start
To shed tears like a cloud that starts to pour,
And gnaw his hands, saying, 'Alas! Before
What our king saw we now see haunting us—
That peerless one was often warning us.'

We owe much to the Prophets since they said

What is the outcome that waits up ahead:
They said, 'You'll just grow thorns with what you sow;

3785

If you do this no other things will grow—
Get seeds from me that give good yields today!
Fly with my wings, so arrows fly that way!
You don't know now it's real and necessary—

You'll say it was required eventually.
That Prophet is you, the aware 'you' who
Knows in the end the need to flee is true.
Your last 'you' reached your first 'you', and it came
To be made conscious and thus reach its aim.
Your real 'you' is inside another 'you'.

3790

I'd serve the man who sees his self that's true!
The elder sees in a mere brick each trace
Of what youths see in mirrors that they face.

The Princes said, 'We have defied His Highness,
Ignoring his command and all his kindness.

We took too lightly his words, which were true,
And all his kindness that's unequalled too.

We've fallen in a trench—this is our plight:
Wounded and killed without an actual fight.

Relying on our own know-how and reason

3795

Is what brought for us all this tribulation.
We saw ourselves disease-free previously
Like those who don't know they're sick actually.
The hidden illness is now clear as day
Since we see we are captives now and prey.'
The Master's shade is better than *zehr* prayer;
Contentment's better than lots of fine fare,
A seeing eye than walking sticks alone—
The eye can tell a jewel from a stone.

They then enquired through sorrow they were feeling:

3800

'Whose portrait is this that we are now seeing?'
After they'd asked this much while travelling
A mystic sheikh did the unravelling,
Not from things heard, but God's communication—
The secrets were shown to him at his station.

He said, 'The Pleiades is not deemed finer—
That portrait is of the princess of China.
She's hidden like the soul and embryos
In a concealed place which nobody knows.

No man or woman can reach her—the king
Conceals her to block every harmful thing.

3805

He wants to save her reputation there—
Birds even can't fly over in the air!

Any heart smitten is unfortunate—

May no one suffer being seduced by it!
The ignorant seed earns a booby prize
For those who sow it and ignore advice,
Those who trust their own know-how and proceed,
Saying: "Through my own reasoning I'll succeed."

A fraction of That Grace is far superior

3810

To all the intellect's plans—they're inferior.
Quit all your plotting, prince! Instead return
To Grace and die there happily once you learn.
Your stratagems won't help you—they'll all fail.
Until you die to them none will avail.'

Story about the Sadr-e Jahaan of Bukhara: any beggar who begged verbally was excluded from his universal and liberal charity. A poor scholar who forgot this was too eager, rushed and begged him verbally in his cavalcade. The Sadr-e Jahaan turned his face away from him, so he contrived a new disguise every day: sometimes disguised as a woman under a burka, sometimes as a blind man with bandaged eyes and face, but through discernment the king always recognized him etc.

It was in this Bukharan lord's good nature

To always be kind when he sees a beggar.

His boundless giving of such charity

Scattered gold from his generosity.

The gold was wrapped in paper. He would give

3815

So generously as long as he would live—

Like the self-gambling moon with the sun's radiance,

Which gives what it receives to all existence.

(What gives gold to the earth? The sun of course—

The gold in mines and ruins thanks that source.)

For rations, each day one group got appointed

So no group ever would get disappointed:

The injured would receive them on one day

And then the local widows the next day,

Then poor folk from the Prophet's family,

3820

Then jurists who worked hard in penury.

The next day others who were empty-handed,

Then those with debts that had now been demanded.

His one condition was that no one speak

To ask him vocally for what they seek.

Instead the rule was silence for them all—

The paupers had to just stand like a wall.

When he came near while travelling, if a beggar

Asked vocally he'd then get naught, no matter:

'Whoever's silent gets help' was his theory.

3825

His purses were for silent people merely.

Unusually, an old man said one day:

'Give me alms for I'm starving here today!'

The lord refused. The old man grew offended.

Men were stunned he was hurt though he'd demanded.
The lord said, 'You've behaved so shamelessly!'

He answered, 'You're more shameless now than me,
Since you've enjoyed this world, yet you want now
To gain that world through greed too anyhow!'

He laughed and gave him money nonetheless—

3830

Only that old man got thus that largesse;
Others who begged from him would never see
A penny of his money consequently.

One day it was the jurists' turn alone

And one of them, through greed, began to moan.
He made appeals, but all failed nonetheless—

His supplication tasted no success.
He bandaged his legs the next day, and then
He stood abjectly with the injured men.

To make it seem his legs were broken, he

3835

Tied splints on each side very deviously.
The lord though recognized him and gave nothing.

He hid his face with his coat the next morning—
That great one saw and gave him naught once more
Due to his sin of speaking up before.

When with a hundred stratagems he failed

He covered up like women, fully veiled,
Then sat with widows, head hung low, lips sealed,
And making sure his hands were both concealed.

Still the lord knew and gave no charity.

3840

Denial hurt that man's heart terribly—
He went to a shroud-seller the next day:

'Wrap me and put me out there in the way
Of that lord, then watch from a place that's near
Until Lord Sadr-e Jahaan passes here—
Maybe he'll think I'm dead, then for the cost
Of this felt shroud some gold coins will be tossed.
Whatever he gives I'll give half to you.'

For that the poor man did what he had to:
He placed him wrapped in felt on that road when
The lord was happening to pass again—

3845

He tossed some gold on the felt. Fearing waste,
The trickster stuck his hand out then in haste:
He'd feared the shroud-seller would get the prize
And then that cheat might hide it from his eyes.
After he stuck his hand out from the shroud
He stuck his head out too and cried aloud:
'See how I got it from you finally,
You who had blocked all generosity!'
'O stubborn one,' the mighty Lord Sadr said,

3850

'You got no bounty until you were dead.'
The secret truth of '*Die before you die!*'*
Is Godsend comes once you should finally die.
Other than dying nothing else succeeds
With God, O trickster with such cunning deeds!
One Grace is better than lots of exertions,
For they are prone to hundreds of corruptions.
Divine Grace all depends on dying thus;
The truest men have tested this for us.
Such people's deaths are not without God's Favour—
Don't live without God's Grace and Favour ever!
That is an emerald which you now depend on—
Without it you can't blind the world's old dragon.

3855

Story about two brothers, one of whom had a few chin hairs while the other was a beardless youth. They slept one night in a hostel for single men. The youth set up bricks behind his backside. Eventually a sexual predator crept close and quietly took the bricks from behind him. The boy woke up and began to fight, saying: 'Where are those bricks? Where have you taken them?' He answered, 'Why did you put the bricks there?' etc.

A beardless youth came with his older brother
For a big party hosted by a neighbour.
The guests stayed busy there throughout the day
And one third of the night too, so to stay
Was the best option for those two, for fear
The night police would find them outside here.
The older brother's chin had hair on it

3860

And his face was so radiant it seemed lit.
The beardless youth was ugly-faced and yet he
Placed twenty bricks behind his arse for safety.
A pederast prowled there among the gathering;
That lustful one moved those bricks he'd been stacking.
He touched the boy who jumped up suddenly:
'Dog-worshipper, who are you? Answer me!'
He said, 'Why did you stack the bricks that way?'

The boy said, 'Why did you take them away?
I'm a sick child and vulnerable: I keep

3865

Taking precautions at each place I sleep.'
'If you've a fever,' then that prowler said,
'Why not go to the hospital instead?
Or a good doctor's house, so he might then
Treat you so you recover health again'
'Where can I go? Do you not really know
I'm preyed upon wherever I should go?
Oh where can I go to when everywhere
I go to I am preyed upon still there?

Always there is a dirty infidel

3870

Pursuing me like a wild animal.
The Sufi lodge is safe supposedly,
But I did not find there security:
Hungry and lustful beasts eyed me up there,
Squeezing their balls, with semen in their stare.

Even the honoured one there peeks at me
While rubbing hard his penis secretly.

The Sufi lodge's like this, what of the store—

A herd of donkeys, uncouth demons, more!
Donkeys don't know honour and piety

3875

Or fear and hope, or dreading what might be.
The intellect seeks safety, justice too,
For men and women—where though? If I knew!

And if I flee to women desperately,

Like Joseph, I will face catastrophe.

Joseph wound up in gaol due to a woman—

I'd be put on the gallows—worse than prison!
In ignorance such women would touch me,

Then I'd be murdered by their family.
 Not safe with men nor women, what's the cure 3880
 When neither let me feel safe and secure?'
 The boy looked at his older brother then:
 'He's free from stress—he has chin hairs like men.
 No need to use bricks for my older brother—
 No brutes like you come who would sell their mother!
 A few chin hairs protect you better than
 Thirty bricks blocking your arse ever can!'

Shade from God's Favour, though small, is worth more
 Than efforts of the pious by the score:
 Satan removes the bricks of piety— 3885
 Though there be hundreds, he'll succeed. You'll see.
 Count the bricks stacked by you, though they be numerous,
 Less than a few hairs grown through the Most Glorious!
 Each of these hairs is like a mountain then,
 An emperor's peace agreement for all men.
 Put hundreds of locks on a door—some thief
 Will take them all off and it could be brief.
 If the police chief puts mere stickers near
 That warn thieves, they will all then quake with fear.
 Mountain-strong barriers are those from His Grace 3890
 '*Like signs of majesty seen in their face.*'*
 Don't use bricks, you nice-natured man, but neither
 Feel safe from that vile devil, heavy sleeper!
 Go and get two hairs from That Grace, then you
 Can sleep securely and not worry too.
 Sleeping is better than prayer for the knowers
 With knowledge that enlightens, unlike scholars'.
 The calm while floating felt by one who'd swim
 Beats efforts by one who can't swim like him.
 Wisdom's a sea without shore and the seeker 3895
 Of wisdom is the diver who looks deeper.
 Though he live for a thousand years, he'll never
 Get sated in this search that lasts forever.
 The Messenger of God himself has stated:
 '*There are two greedy ones who'll not be sated*':

Exegesis of the saying of the Prophet Mohammad, 'There are two greedy ones who will never be sated: the seeker of this world and the seeker of knowledge.' This knowledge must be different from knowledge of the world, so that there are two different categories, since knowledge of the world is part of the world itself etc., and that would make it 'the seeker of this world and the seeker of this world', a duplication and not a differentiation. Here also is an explanation.

*Seekers of this world and what is in it,
Seekers of knowledge and arranging it—*
Thus when you mean dividing into two,
The knowledge can't be this world's knowledge too.
What's outside this world? The next world; it's clear,
And knowledge of it leads you far from here.

3900

The three princes discuss the best plan regarding what happened.

Those three afflicted men then brainstormed there,
Each suffering pain and sorrow as his share,
All three reflective and in ecstasy,
And all three sick with the same malady.
In silence all three had the same thought and,
While talking, the same proof in their command.
At one point all were weeping there together,
Shedding blood on the table-spread of terror.
Later, due to fire in their hearts, the brothers
Breathed burning sighs just like the aloes burners.

3905

The discourse of the eldest brother.

The oldest of them said, 'O my good brothers,
Were we not forthright in advising others?
Whenever one complained of poverty,
Affliction, earthquakes, fear, calamity,
We'd say, "Don't moan about trials such as this!"

Be patient—*Patience is the key to bliss.*
 What has become of patience being key?
 That rule has been made void amazingly!
 Didn't we say, "When it is hardship's turn
 Laugh happily like gold in fire and burn!"
 We told the army, "In the time of battle
 Beware not to lose courage or your mettle!"
 When there were severed heads strewn on the ground,
 Trampled by horses as they raced around,
 We would shout at the troops, "Advance now further!
 Penetrate like the spears, so you can conquer!"
 We told the whole world, "Patience is the best,
 For patience is light and lamp of the breast"—
 Now it's our turn we doubt all of a sudden,
 Hiding in purdah like the ugly women.
 O heart which would give others ardour, you
 Give yourself ardour and feel some shame too!
 O tongue, who used to counsel everyone,
 Why are you silent now it is your turn?
 Wisdom, where is your counsel men adore?
 It's your turn—where's your fussing from before?
 You who removed from hearts anxieties,
 It's your turn, so now wag your beard once please!
 If this is a fake beard, since you're so low,
 Did you just mock beards which back then you'd grow?
 When counselling others, "Come on!" you would shout.
 Like women, in your grief you now cry out!
 You were a cure for their pain previously—
 When pain comes to you why sit silently?
 You used to shout at troops, so they'd obey—
 Shout now! Or have you lost your voice today?
 You wove cloth through your knowledge for so long—
 Now wear a cloak made from that if it's strong!
 Your friends' ears loved your song that they could hear,
 Now take out your hand and pull your own ear!
 Always a head, don't be a tail! Defeat
 Grabs your moustache and beard, your hands and feet.
 On the game's board it's your turn to move now—

3910

3915

3920

3925

Restore yourself to good health too somehow!’

Mention of that king who brought a learned man to his gathering against his will and made him sit there. The cup-bearer offered him wine and held the jug before him. He turned away and was angry and bitter. The king told the cup-bearer: ‘Come and restore his health!’ The cup-bearer pounded him on the head a few times and made him drink wine, and so on.

A drunkard king held a feast one fine night.

A jurist passed his gate, but was in sight.

The king told men, ‘Bring him inside for me,

Give him some ruby wine then liberally!’

Against his will they dragged him to the king,

3930

Bitter as poison at their gathering.

He then refused wine offered and he turned

Away from king and server, whom he shunned.

‘I’ve never drunk wine in my life!’ he said,

‘I’d rather drink some poison now instead!

Give poison, not wine, please, for my drink now,

So I can get free from all this somehow!’

He wouldn’t drink, but quarrelled once again,

Becoming with them grim like death in pain,

Like carnal-minded men who’re sensual,

3935

Yet sit in this world with the spiritual.

God keeps His own elite in hiding when

*They drink** His wine for liberated men.

When the cup’s offered to a veiled one, he

Sees nothing but the word shortsightedly:

He shuns their guidance, turns his eyes away;

His eyes can’t see their gift. Were there a way

From his ear to his throat, this might have brought

Their counsel’s secret to him, but there’s not.

His soul is not light, but all fire—who would

Throw anything in fire but husks? Who would?

3940

The husks go in, but kernels stay outside—

How can the husks keep bellies satisfied?

Hellfire just harms husks—though it be eternal
It cannot cause a problem for the kernel.
If a flame meets the kernel, it's for cooking
And not for burning. You know if you're looking.
In both the past and future this applies—
It is the law from God who is The Wise.
When He forgives pure kernels, and husks too,
How can He burn the kernel? That's not true.
If He should pound one's head as favour, he
Will start to crave red wine immediately;
If He does not beat him, his mouth shuts tight
Just like the jurist shunning wine that night.

3945

The king then told the server, 'Saqi, how
Are you so still? Give it, revive him now!'
There is a hidden king for each mind too
Who waylays anyone he chooses to.
The Eastern sun and its light both remain
Like prisoners who are tied up in His chain.
He causes this sphere to revolve as well
By simply chanting in its brain His spell.
The mind that can defeat in backgammon
Has dice from Him to be the champion.
The server slapped his head a bit and said:
'Take it!' He drank due to fear for his head.

3950

He then grew drunk and merry, going in
And telling jokes. Then soon he would begin
To get more bold: he snapped his fingers and
Went to the urinal. This was unplanned,
But he found someone there so ravishing:

3955

A slave-girl and her owner was the king.
On seeing her his jaw dropped literally,
Reason fled, fire filled his frame instantly.
Celibate for so long, now drunk and yearning,
He grabbed her with both hands with his lust burning.
She trembled much and screamed—it was no use:
She couldn't fend him off and then break loose.
In such encounters, grabbed by a man's hand,

3960

A woman's like dough in a baker's hand:
 He kneads it gently, then with force; his hands
 Can demonstrate the way that dough expands—
 He spreads it flat first on a board, and then
 A short while later rolls it up again;
 Now he adds water, then salt, for the sake
 Of putting it near oven flames to bake.
 Seeker and sought are intertwined the same;
 Conquered and conqueror, too, are in this game.
 It's not for husband and wife only, rather
 Each loved one has this skill and every lover,
 An intertwining of all things, like Ways
 With Ramin, but it differs in each case.*
 Everyone has a different aim, you know,
 And different twists eventually will show.
 For husbands and wives we've heard them declare:
 'Husband, don't banish your wife! Please be fair!
 For since your wedding she's been by your side,
 Entrusted to your care, so please abide!
 O trusty man, whatever you should do
 To her, good or bad, God will do to you.'

3965

3970

The jurist got so wasted there, in brief;
 Abstention left him as he sought relief.
 He threw himself at that maid, who was lovely.
 His fire spread to her cotton very quickly.
 Soul joined with soul and bodies too then mated,
 Pulsing like birds who've been decapitated.
 What wine banquet? What king? What's chastity,
 Religion, fear or dread of what's to be?
 Their eyes became like *ayn* and *ghayn*, one pair,*
 No Hasan nor Hosayn were seen in there.
 It took quite long—how to return from there?
 The king grew tired of waiting, unaware,
 So he came to find out what happened and
 Saw there *al-Qaari 'a*'s earthquake on that land.*
 The jurist leapt up scared, and went back to
 The gathering, snatching there a goblet too.

3975

The king grew full of fire like hell, and he
Was thirsting for that pair's blood angrily.
The jurist saw his angry face blow up,
Bitter and murderous like a poisonous cup,
Then shouted to the server: 'Why just sit?
Give him some so he regains health—pour it!'
The king laughed, 'I've recovered now of course,
Good man, and that fine maiden can be yours.
As king, my job's to be fair in the end:

3980

I drink the same as what I give each friend.
How could I serve to friends and kin what I
Would not enjoy myself to have? Not I!

I even give my servants what I eat
And on my private table is their seat.
Raw or cooked, I give my slaves the same food
That I myself eat and consider good.

3985

While I wear silk or satin clothes, I dress
My servants, too, in that and nothing less.
I'm humbled by the Prophet, who would say:
"Dress them in what you wear!" That's the right way.
The Prophet told his students similarly:
"Feed with what you eat all your family!"

You've helped so many to regain health and
You've shown forbearance too with a kind hand.
Restore your own health valiantly—be eager
To take forbearing wisdom as your leader!
When such forbearance guides you like a wing
Your soul soars to The Throne of The Real King.
Mohammad's once became Boraq, one hears,
And carried him above celestial spheres.

3990

*After full discussion the princes head for the province of China, towards
their beloved and their objective, in order to be as near as possible to
that goal. Although the way of union is blocked, it is praiseworthy to get
as near as possible.*

The princes finished talking and departed:

It was that moment when things really started.
 Each chose being patient and a truth-confirmer,
 Then they set off for China, feeling calmer.
 They left their parents, and their kingdom too,
 For the beloved hidden from their view,
 Like Ebrahim Adham—love made him poor,
 Far from his throne where he had been secure;
 Like Abraham—he left all men amazed
 By jumping in the fire that then had blazed;*
 Like Esmail—with such patience that could stagger
 He gave his neck up to love and that dagger.

Story about Emr al-Qays, who was an Arab king and exceedingly handsome. He was the Joseph of his time and the Arab women were dying to be with him, like Zolaykha. He was a poet and wrote, 'Halt! Let's weep for the memory of a beloved and waystation!' Since all women pursued him with their souls, one may wonder what his love and heartbreak poems were about. Surely he knew that they all are examples of a form that has been drawn on frames of clay. Ultimately, Emr al-Qays had a spiritual state that caused him to flee his kingdom and children in the middle of the night and disguise himself in a dervish cloak. He then went to another region in search of That one who is beyond locations. 'He chooses for His mercy whom He wishes' etc.*

When Emr al-Qays got sick of being king.

4000

Love drew him from the Arab lands to bring
 Him to Tabuk, where he made bricks of all things.
 They told their own king: 'One of the extolled kings,
 Emr al-Qays, has come here as the fresh prey
 Of love, and he makes bricks instead all day!'
 Their king got up that night without ado.

'Handsome king,' he told him, 'So handsome, you
 Are our time's Joseph with two kingdoms, brother:

A country forms one, beauty forms the other.
 Men rush to be slaves of your sabre soon,

4005

Women are captive to your cloudless moon.
It is my fortune if you stay—don't go!
By joining with you my soul will then grow.
My kingdom and I are from now on yours
You who left kingdoms for your higher cause.'
He reasoned with him, but he uttered naught,
Then suddenly unveiled what he had sought—
Imagine what he whispered of his pain
And love! He made him, like himself, insane:
The king then joined with him and took his hand,
Renouncing too his own throne and his land.
The two kings then set off for distant climes—
Love didn't sin this once, but many times.
Honey for adults, milk for children, it
Is the last load for every boat that's fit.
So many kings were taken like these two
By love from kingdoms, and their families too.

4010

The souls of these three princes roamed in flight
Near China, like birds feeding left and right.
They didn't dare to say what they were thinking—
It was a dangerous secret, not worth risking.
When love in anger strings its bow it's clear
A million heads are cheap to strike, not dear.
Love even when without rage and quite happy
Has the wild character to slaughter rashly—
If when content it's like this, one can tell
Its character when it's enraged as well.
To lions who are slain by love's sharp sabre
May we now sacrifice the soul's own pasture.
One killing beats a thousand lives: it's good
When monarchies get slain through servanthood.
They whispered secrets then and used allusions,
Feeling a hundred fears that need precautions.
Only God knew their secrets; just the sky
Was intimate enough to hear them sigh.
They used a special terminology
To share the information privately.

4015

4020

The vulgar learnt *bird language*, and they got
 Both leadership and pomp then as their lot.
 These words are just the birdsong's form, that's all: 4025
 The vulgar don't know of their states at all.
 Where's Solomon, who knows the bird's songs? Where?
 Though he gained kingdoms, Satan's unaware—
 Resembling Solomon is all he's got,
 His knowledge trickery, not '*We've been taught.*'
 Since God was pleased with Solomon, he knew
Birds' language through '*We've been taught*',* unlike you
 Who only know the birds now in the air,
 Since of *divine** birds you are not aware.
 Beyond Mount Qaf is the Simorgh's location,* 4030
 Not a hand loom for all imagination,
 But only for one who sees it and then
 Is separated afterwards again—
 Not severance that cuts a good purpose off,
 For that's secure from being thus cut off;
 It will preserve that spiritual body well:
 The sun withdraws from snow awhile as well.
 For your soul's sake seek from them piety!
 Beware, don't steal their terminology!

Zolaykha would use 'Joseph' for what's good, 4035
 Even for frankincense and aloes wood.
 She hid his name in others too while speaking
 And told just confidantes the secret meaning:
 Zolaykha would say, 'Fire makes wax soft', meaning
 'My own beloved likes me with warm feeling.'
 Or if she said, 'Watch the moon rise! I've seen!'
 Or 'Willow branches suddenly turn green',
 Or 'Leaves are shaking in a lovely way',
 Or 'Rue seeds burn with such sweet scent today!'
 Or 'Nightingale heard secrets from the rose', 4040
 Or 'Now the king's love for his lady shows',
 Or 'What good fortune I've found here today!'
 Or 'Dust the bedding well and brush away!'
 Or 'Now the water-carrier's brought a cup',

Or 'Watch the way the sun is rising up!'
Or 'Last night they cooked a hot stew for me',
Or 'All the carrots were cooked perfectly',
Or 'This bread here is tasteless!' Or 'Somehow
The world is spinning back to front right now!'
Or 'I've a headache!' Or 'My headache is
Getting much better, which brings happiness'—
If she gave praise, it was for his embrace,
If she complained—exile from that one's place.
She used a million names, but her intention

4045

Was Joseph with all of the names she'd mention.
If she said it while thirsty, she'd become
Sated and drunk from his cup, which would come,
Her thirst quenched by his name, which would begin
To be for her a special drink within.
That lofty name, if she felt any pain,
Would quickly change all of that pain to gain.
And on cold days it was her fleece coat too—
That's what, through love, the loved one's name can do.

4050

Regular men say God's name constantly,
But if without love it lacks potency.
What Jesus did with God's name 'Hu'* became
So clear to Zolaykha through Joseph's name.
When the soul's joined with God, they are the same:
You're mentioning both if you call one by name.
Empty of self and full of love for Him—

4055

What is inside drips out of the pot's brim.
And exile's onions' smell makes men cry while
The scent of union's saffron makes them smile.
Everyone's heart has many wishes in it,
But this is not the way of real love, is it?
Love makes the sun seem the Beloved, though
It's just a veil across That Face we know.
Those who can't tell that veil from It will be
Sun-worshippers—stay far from them, trust me!
He is the lover's day and daily bread,
The lover's heart and how it burned and bled.

4060

Fish gain wealth from the fountain that they're in,
And water, food, clothes, sleep, and medicine.
Like children suckling on the breast—what's known
In the two worlds to them is milk alone.
The child knows milk, yet doesn't know it really.
Deliberation has no access clearly.
The healing scroll perplexed the soul anew—
It sought the Opener and the opened too.
While moving, if it's free from such confusion,
That is because what moves it is The Ocean.
When the soul finds God it immediately,
Just like a torrent, gets lost in The Sea.
The seed's first lost and then a fig tree grows:
'No gold till you died!' means this if one knows.*

4065

*After staying for a long time in China and exhausting their patience, the
eldest says:*

*'Farewell! I am going to present myself to the king.
Either my feet will take me to my goal,
Or I will lose my head just like my soul.'*
The advice of his brothers is of no avail.
'You who blame lovers, leave them alone today!
How can you guide those whom God led astray?' And so on.
The eldest said, 'O brothers, heed and see—
All of this waiting here is killing me!
I've had enough. I don't care any more.
Enduring this has burned with flames that roar.
All my endurance has been used up, brothers.
My sorry plight's a warning to all lovers.
I don't want life in separation—it
Would make me just another hypocrite.
How long will pain of severance make me suffer?
Chop off my head, so love gives me another!
Being kept alive by love is my true creed.
To live with this head and soul's shame indeed.
Love's sword sweeps dust away from lovers' souls.

4070

‘*The sins’ eraser*’ is one of its roles.

My moon shines once the body fades away—

4075

My soul’s moon finds the clearest sky that day.

For lifetimes, idol, I’ve banged on love’s drum

To the tune of ‘*In death’s my life to come.*’*

My soul claimed it’s a duck—it won’t complain

About a torrent that brings woe again:

Why should a duck care that a ship capsized

When, for its ship, its webbed feet have sufficed?

My body and soul live on through this claim—

How can I just keep silent all the same?

Although I’m not asleep, I am now dreaming.

4080

Although I’m not a liar, I am claiming.

Though you behead me countless times, I will

Keep shining brighter like a candle still.

The haystack burns down once it’s set alight—

The stack-round moon still guides those out at night.

Joseph’s brothers once used such trickery

To hide him so that Joseph could not see.

Although their tricks did then keep him concealed,

By Joseph’s shirt the truth would be revealed.*

The other princes counselled him: ‘Don’t you

4085

Ignore the dangers or block them from view!

Don’t put salt on our wounds now and don’t drink

The poison rashly! First just stop and think!

Without a Shaikh’s advice how can you go

When your heart lacks the vision now to know?’

Woe to the unfledged bird which flies too high

Then falls in dangerous spots where it could die!

Intellect is Man’s wings with which to fly,

Yet, if one lacks it, guides can lead one high.

So be victorious or seek victory:

4090

Be a mystic or seek a visionary!

Without wisdom’s key knocking doors is just

Not right at all when prompted by your lust.

The world’s ensnared by lust if you begin

To watch, and wounds that look like medicine.
The snake lifts up its head like death today,
A big leaf in its mouth to draw some prey.
Among the plants it looks like a tall weed—
The bird thinks it's a stalk and won't take heed.

It perches on the leaf to eat from there,

4095

But falls into the snake's mouth unaware.
A crocodile has long worms coiled around
Its teeth, and there worms always can be found
Because of the food remnants stuck in there
Between its teeth—little birds in the air
See worms and food and then start to imagine
It is a meadow, but it's just their coffin.

Once its mouth's full the snake will swallow then
And afterwards close up its mouth again.

This world is full of sweets, but they are trials

4100

Just like the open mouths of crocodiles.
You who must scrape a living to get food
Beware time's crocodile's wiles are too good!
A fox lies waiting on the ground—some grain
That can lure prey is left out in the plain
Until it sees the heedless crow succumbing.

That wily one then grabs its claw through cunning.
Animals have a million tricks you see—

How numerous tricks of humans then must be!
Qur'an in hand like Zayn al-Abedin,*

4105

A dagger up his sleeve—that's what I mean.
Smiling, he says 'My lord' to you, but he
Hides in his heart cruel tricks and sorcery.
His lethal poison looks like milk and honey—
Don't go without a guide who's very savvy!
All lustful pleasures are deceit and fakeness;

Around the lightning flash there is a darkness:
The lightning flash is false and won't last long,
Around it darkness, and your path is long—

With its light you can't even read some writing,

4110

Let alone ride a horse home helped by lightning!
Devotion to the lightning makes you pay

With sunrise keeping its bright light away.
Lightning's fraud leads you on for miles, no less,
Without a guide in the dark wilderness,
Now on a mountain, then inside a river,
Sometimes in one direction, then the other.

Seeker of status, you'll not find a guide,
And if you ever do, you'll turn aside,
Saying: 'I've travelled sixty miles this way
And now this guide tells me I'm lost—no way!
If I heed this surprising news, I'd then
Have to start under him all over again.
To make this journey I've gambled away
My whole life, so I'll keep on, come what may!' 4115
You journeyed by opinion, as with lightning—
Travel by inspiration like suns rising!
'*Opinion needs the Truth*'* you can recite,
Yet you choose lightning and not the sun's light.

Hey wretch, come to our boat or tether yours 4120
To this boat if yours can't complete this course!
'How should I quit my showing off,' he'll say,
'And lust for power, to follow on your way?'
Being blind with a guide is better than
Being alone—that's much more flawed, good man!
You scamper from a flea toward a scorpion,
From a mere drop of pain toward an ocean,
From father's harshness to cruel thugs no less,
With their clamour and nasty wickedness.

Like Joseph, you flee one pain you know well 4125
To '*Let us go and play!*'* deep down a well.
Like him, you'll fall in due to games you played,
But you are wondering now: 'Where is God's aid?'
If it weren't for his father's answer then
He never would have been pulled up again.
His father let him do what he wished to:
'You can go and do what you wish to do.'

If a blind man shuns the Messiah, then

He'll have no guidance like the Jewish men.
 Though blind, he would receive light previously, 4130
 But now he'll live both blind and miserably.
 Jesus tells him: 'Touch me, blind man! Reach out!
 I have a special kohl for the devout.
 If you are blind, you'll see due to this kohl
 And then touch Joseph's shirt inside the soul.'
 Fortune and the right path are found within
 In work after defeat, not when you win.
 Give up the pointless work! Set it aside,
 Old donkey, and find for yourself a guide!
 May none but the true Elder be your teacher, 4135
 Not old through time, but trained to be your leader!
 Darkness lovers see radiance also when
 They follow such a guide among the men.
 Surrender's needed, not to strive for long—
 There's no point rushing on a path that's wrong.
 Henceforth, I won't seek a path to the ether;
 I'll seek a Master Elder as my leader.
 He is the leader to beyond, you know.
 Where does the arrow shoot high from? The bow.
 Because of Abraham, Nimrod would try 4140
 To fly then, as a vulture, to on high.
 Through lust, he went high often, but no vulture
 Can fly up to the lofty heavens ever.
 Abraham even told him then, 'O traveller,
 It's better for you if I be your helper.
 Make me a ladder to lead you up there
 And you'll arrive without flight through the air.'
 The heart, too, goes like lightning in fast motions
 East and West, without camel or provisions,
 Like people's consciousness at night, which keeps 4145
 Travelling to distant cities when one sleeps.
 Like mystics, through a hidden route they see
 Such different worlds while sitting comfortably.
 Without the power to perform such acts
 How does one get from distant regions facts?
 That information and these true traditions

Are vouched for by the Masters by the millions.
There's no dispute among these sources ever
Such as there always is in mere conjecture —
The latter is to search on a dark night,
The former seeing it in midday's light.

4150

Arise, Nimrod! Seek wings from men—you'll never
Get from the vultures like yourself a ladder.
Particular intellect's a vulture truly—
Its wings are grown from eating carrion only.
The *abdāl*'s intellect, like Gabriel's wing,
Flies to the Lote Tree's shade,* past everything,
Saying: 'I'm lovely and a sultan's falcon;
I'm not a vulture who's mixed up with carrion.
Abandon vultures! I will be your helper.

4155

One wing of mine for you is so much better.'
How long will you ride blindly? Try to learn!
You need a teacher to be skilled and earn.
Don't shame yourself in China's capital!
Seek a wise man and don't leave him at all!
Heed what the Plato of the age should say!
Comply and put your lust out of the way!

In China everyone says for their king:

'*He does not father children*',* mentioning
Our king has never had a child, and he
Does not let women in proximity.

4160

When other kings claim something similar

He chops their necks off with his scimitar.
'Since you claimed this,' our king says angrily,
'Come and prove that I have a family—

If you prove I've a daughter you'll be spared

From my sharp sword for the claim you've declared!
If not, I'll chop your head off for your role,
Pull off the Sufi cloak, too, from your soul.'

Those who said empty lies about this lord

4165

Will never save their necks from his sharp sword.
You who have said untruths so ignorantly,
Look at the severed heads in this trench! See?

A trench filled from its depths up to the top
With severed heads. Transgression means the chop!
All have paid for this false claim—all the same
Beheading themselves with a spurious claim.
Beware! Look at this with a careful eye!
Don't make such claims or think up such a lie!

'You'll make our lives much worse!' the princes said,
'O brother, by whom are you now being led?
If one should journey for a century
In blindness, that's no journey actually.
Don't enter unarmed into a fierce fray!
Don't enter recklessly into harm's way!'
Despite these words to their impatient brother
He said, 'I loathe these words that you now utter!
My breast is burning like grills anyhow.

The crop's ripe; it's the sickle's time right now.
The patience that was in my chest has gone:

Love has set fire to it and now there's none.
My patience died when love was born in there.
It's dead—long live those who're here and aware!
You who report reproach, I've left all that!

Don't try to beat a curve of cold iron flat!
I'm diving in. Let go of my legs! Where
In my limbs is there understanding? Where?
A camel, I bear loads until worn out—
I'm done now. You can kill me without doubt.

A hundred trenches full of heads all chopped—
That's joy next to my pain, which can't be topped.

Never again will I, through fear and dread,
Beat lust's drum under blankets on my bed.
I'll plant my flag out in the open plain
Then either see her face or die in vain.
If throats aren't worthy of that wine, then they
Should be slit by the sword and end their stay.
Eyes that don't gain through union with her kind
Are better off instead being pale and blind.
Tear off the ears that don't deserve to hear

4170

4175

4180

4185

Her secret—heads don't need that kind of ear.
The hand which holds what is inadequate
Is better under butchers' knives that cut.
And feet which walked for you, but haven't led
The spirit yet to her narcissus bed
Are better off being shackled, since, you'll see,
Such feet just pose a headache finally.'

Explanation of how the striver does not give up, though he knows the amplitude of God's bestowal may cause that goal to reach him from a different direction and by means of different action which he hasn't imagined. He keeps all his imagination and hopes fixed on this method, so he knocks on this same door even though God may cause his daily bread to reach him from a different door which he has not foreseen 'and will provide for him from a place he hasn't considered'. 'The slave makes plans, but God makes things happen.' It may be that a slave may have the thought while a slave: 'It will be sent through a different door even though I knock on this door.' God may send his daily bread through that door. To sum up, all these doors are of one palace, which is presented here with its exposition.*

My wish will either be met on this journey
Or when I come back home from it and you'll see.
It may depend on travel, only then
To find it after coming home again.
I'm seeking the Beloved seriously
Until I find out that I shouldn't be.
If I've not roamed the world how can my ear
Perceive that He is right now with me here?
How can I understand His being with me
Except through journeying extensively.
God told us He's with us, sealed shut the heart,
So that fact could reach the ear of the heart.
Once the path is completed by such men
The seal on the heart will be opened then.
The calculation sometimes is correct

4190

4195

After two errors. If one should reflect
One would think: 'If I'd known that He is here
With us, I'd not have searched, but it grew clear
Only after I made the journey there—
Sharp-thinking can't alone make you aware.
The payment of the Shaikh's debt similarly
Needed the boy to weep then bitterly:
The boy who there sold halva wept and then
The great Shaikh's debt was paid to all those men—
This mystical tale was told previously
In a prior volume of *The Masnavi*.*

4200

He fills your heart with fear of losing something
So you won't then begin to crave a new thing—
Your craving thus gives you a benefit
Although, through someone else He's sending it.
You fixed your hopes on one place doggedly,
Saying: 'The fruit will reach me from that tree.'
Your craving though won't be fulfilled from there,
But from another place. You won't know where.

4205

Why does He put that craving in you when
He doesn't want to send it from there then?
For a wise purpose and creative action,
To give your heart bewildering confusion,
So your heart should be left perplexed somehow,
Wondering: 'Where will my wish come from now?'

So you should recognize your ignorance,
And certainty of that world grow at once,

So your heart should be left confused about

4210

The source and what the Actor will draw out.
Through tailoring you crave to make a living,
So while alive you'll earn gold through your stitching—
Through being a goldsmith he'll send it instead,
A job that didn't enter in your head.
'So why did I crave tailoring? That's odd.

Why not that for the daily bread from God?
That's in God's special knowledge you don't see.
He'd willed it thus from Pre-eternity,

So your thoughts should become perplexed and you

Become consumed by such confusion too.

Union with the Beloved will appear

Through effort or what is beyond it here.

I never say, 'My wish will come from there!'

I'm always wondering anxiously from where.

Birds with their heads chopped off fall each direction,

To see to where their souls make their migration.

Either my wish will be gained by my travelling

Or heavenly constellations now unravelling.

Story about that person who dreamed his hopes for gain would be fulfilled in Cairo, and that there was a treasure there in a certain house, in a certain quarter of the city. When he got to Cairo someone said to him, 'I've dreamt that there is treasure in a certain house in a certain quarter of Baghdad.' Then he named the quarter and the house where the first person lived! The first person understood that having being told in a dream about the treasure in Cairo was to give him the certainty that, though he shouldn't seek anywhere but in his own house, the treasure would only be acquired through travelling to Cairo.

A man inherited much wealth and land,

4220

But spent it all with nothing left in hand.

(Inherited wealth won't remain forever—

It didn't wish to leave its owner ever.

Not having had to work, since it comes freely,

One won't know its worth, getting it too easily.

You don't know your soul's value similarly,

Because God's given it to you for free.)

That man lost all possessions, houses too.

Like owls in ruins, he'd have to make do:

'You gave provisions Lord, which fade away—

4225

Send more or let me die!' this man would pray.

He'd think of God once he faced poverty

And started to chant then: 'O My Lord, save me!'

The Prophet said, 'Beloveds are flutes, fellow—

They only ever make sounds when they're hollow.'

Musicians put their flutes down if they're filled—

Don't get full! Let His hand's touch leave you thrilled!

*Between His fingers** feel joy and be empty,

For 'place' gets drunk through wine from 'No-place' clearly!

Rebellion leaves and tears begin to flow,

4230

Which water crops of faith and make them grow.

The reason for a delay in answering the believer's prayer.

Many sincere ones moan while they petition.

From their sincerity smoke wafts to heaven.

From sinners' groans the censor's scent will rise

Beyond this lofty dome with its huge size.

The angels moan to God in desperation:

'O You who answers prayers for Your protection,

A faithful slave is begging You, and he

Has only You to count on desperately.

You are bestowing on the strangers too;

4235

Every seeker will get his wish from You.'

God says, 'It's not because he's base—delaying

Bestowals to him actually is aiding.

Need made him turn from heedlessness to Me;

It dragged him by the hair to Me, you see.

If I bestow, he'll go back all the same

And then become immersed in that mere game.

Though he weep, "O Protector!" with heart torn,

And his breast weary, tell him now: "Moan on!"

I like his voice, his cries of "O God!" too,

4240

And his own secret, which he keeps from view,

And how in supplication too he would

Try to beguile Me every way he could.'

Parrots and nightingales are all caged due

To their nice voices by the likes of you.

Would crows and owls get caged just like that pair?

I've never heard of that, not anywhere!

A gazer of young boys once, we are told,

Met a fine youth and a man who was old—

When both requested bread he'd fetch it quickly
 Then ask the old man to take it all freely,
 But wouldn't give it to the youth at all:
 He would delay; he liked him after all!
 He'd say, 'Sit down a while! There's naught to fear.
 They're looking for fresh bread all over here.'
 And when the freshly baked bread came, he'd say:
 'Halva is coming, son, so you should stay.'
 He kept him for much longer in this way—
 Through hidden notes he made the youth his prey.
 He'd say, 'I have things to discuss with you,
 O beauty of the world, stay here won't you!'
 When the believers are frustrated, see
 It's for this reason too most certainly.

*Return to the story of that person who was shown treasure in Cairo and
 explaining his supplication to God due to poverty.*

When he spent his inheritance and then
 Became poor, he would weep and pray again.
 Who knocks on Mercy's door and does not see
 A hundred spring times come eventually?
 A voice spoke to him in a dream and said:
 'Your wealth's in Cairo—that's where you must head.
 Go there and you'll find solved your own affair.
 The Source of Hope has answered thus your prayer.
 There's a huge treasure at a certain spot.
 You have to go to Cairo for your lot.
 Wretch, leave Baghdad and don't delay departure
 To Cairo, home and origin of sugar!'

On reaching Cairo from Baghdad he was
 Encouraged by what he saw for his cause.
 That voice's promise gave hope of much gain
 And that in Cairo it would end his pain:
 'At a spot in a quarter over there
 Lies buried treasure, special and so rare.'
 He had no money left, however, and

He'd need to beg from people of that land.
Shame and high aspirations held him back,
So he stressed patience with his want and lack,
But his soul would keep fluttering due to hunger,
So he saw no way to not be a beggar
And forage there. He thought, 'I'll go at night
To beg without shame and not be in sight.
I'll chant and shout as homeless people do,
So from the roofs some coins are thrown down too.'
With this thought he decided then to go
Out in the street and wandered to and fro.
His sense of shame prevented him initially,
Then hunger told him, 'Go and beg!' eventually.
For one third of the night he would keep going,
Then wonder, 'Shall I sleep or keep on begging?'

4265

*That person arrives in Cairo and goes out into the streets and acts like a homeless beggar, and the police arrest him. Then, after having been beaten a lot, he realizes his aim, 'You may hate something although it is better for you', * and 'God will give ease after hardship', * and His saying, 'With hardship comes ease.' * As the Prophet said, 'Take on difficulty to gain relief!' The entire Qur'an and revealed books confirm this.*

The night patrol seized him there suddenly,
Beating with fists and cudgels violently.
It happened that on dark nights many there
Had been mugged and so much concern and care
Preoccupied them, fearing further crime.
Police now searched for muggers all the time.
The Caliph had said, 'Chop their hands for me
If caught at night, even my family!'
He'd threatened the police, who grew afraid:
'Why are you kind to thieves?' is what he said.
'Why do you fall for their cheap flattery
And why accept gold from them easily?
Showing mercy to thieves shows you're instead

4270

4275

Being mean and striking victims on the head!
Don't be lax in revenge because each suffers—
Ignore that! See their victims' suffering, workers!
Cut poisoned fingers off, so harm won't spread—
Infection could leave one's whole body dead.'

Back then, experienced thieves and novices
Had over there become so numerous.
At that time a policeman saw him and
Gave him so many hard blows with his hand.
That poor man answered then with yells and cries:
'Don't hit me! I'll tell the whole truth, no lies!'
Then the policeman said, 'I'll give respite,
So you can speak—why roam the streets at night?
You're not from here, a stranger, new to me—
Tell me what you are plotting honestly!
Ministers blame policemen and ask why
The number of thieves has now grown sky high.
Due to your kind, now thieves are numerous.
Reveal first your depraved accomplices!
I'll punish you for all of them, if you
Won't tell! Thus people's gold will stay safe too.'
After he made oaths, he began to answer:
'I'm no pickpocket, nor am I a burglar!
I'm not a thief or villain who is bad.
I'm not from this place, Cairo, but Baghdad.'

4280

4285

*Explaining the Prophet Mohammad's saying: 'Lies cause doubts while
truth-telling causes confidence.'*

He shared the dream about gold in this land.
His truthful words made his own heart expand.
His oaths showed he was telling what was true,
His burning was clear, and his rue-seed too.
True words can comfort hearts which doubt at first
The way that water quenches someone's thirst,
Except the hearts of veiled ones who are ill
And can't tell Prophets from the morons still.

4290

That message from beyond could even split
The moon above itself on reading it.*
That split, but not the veiled one's heart, For he
Has been disliked, rejected totally.

A fount of tears filled the policeman's eyes
From the heart's scent, not empty words and lies.
The latter comes from hellfire to the lips,
The former from the soul's realm to tongues' tips.
One sea feeds souls, another brings distress—

4295

The lips are where the two seas meet, no less,
Like a bazaar among the cities, where
The products would arrive from everywhere—
Faulty, rip-off, fake products for the fools
And lucrative, desired ones like fine jewels.

In this bazaar the traders who are best
Can tell the real from fake and pass the test.

It is a *place of profit* for their kind,
But *place of loss* to others who are blind.

4300

Each particle in this world you will see
Chain up the fool, but make the wise one free,
Sugar for one, but poison for another,
Kindness for one, but anger for another.

Every inert thing tells tales to the Prophet—
The Kaaba can converse with those who visit.
Mosques bear witness for men who come to pray:
'He would come to me from so far away!'

Abraham found both herb and rose in flame,
Nimrod found pain and death in just the same.*

4305

Mister, we've said this many times before,
But I don't tire from saying it once more.
Bread comes so you won't get emaciated,
Then more bread later—why won't you stay sated?
Because new hunger comes to you and then
Your being sated is removed again.
When hunger's pain becomes your gain, you'll be
Revived in all your body totally.

Relish comes not from sweetmeats, but your hunger—

4310

Hunger makes barley bread more liked than sugar.

Weariness comes from lack of hunger then,

Not from speech that's repeated here again.

How come you're not at all sick of your store

And haggling to cheat people who want more?

How come you haven't got your fill despite

The sixty years you've chosen to backbite?

For many years you have employed false flattery

To coax vaginas open, not grown weary—

You say with much more ardour the last time

4315

The very same false words as the first time.

Pain makes the oldest medicine seem new;

Pain trims each branch of weariness from you.

Pain makes things grow anew like alchemy;

When pain comes weariness leaves totally.

Beware! Don't sigh from weariness again!

Seek pain, seek pain, seek pain, seek pain! Pain, pain!

Useless cures trick those suffering pain, that's all,

Like highwaymen who make you pay their toll.

Salty water does not cure thirst, though it

4320

Seems quite refreshing when you're drinking it—

It tricks you and prevents you seeking out

Sweet water by which plants grow tall and stout,

Just as false gold prevents you noticing

Genuine gold that honest men might bring.

It cuts your feet and wings as a deceiver,

Saying: 'I'm what you seek, so take me, seeker!

I'll take your pain away.' It's pain, you'll see,

Snatching defeat from jaws of victory.

Go and flee the false cures, so that your pain

4325

Becomes productive in that it brings gain.

'You're not a thief,' then the policeman said

'You're a good man, but stupid in the head.

You roam far based on fantasy and dreams.

Your intellect is not so bright, it seems.

I have dreamed many times repeatedly
 Of hidden treasure in Baghdad, you see,
 Buried in such and such a street address.'
 It was the home of this sad man no less!
 It's at that house, so go back and don't roam:
 That foe gave the address of his own home!
 'This is a dream which many times I've had
 About a treasure hidden in Baghdad,
 But I've not travelled, spurred by fantasy—
 After just one dream you came ardently.'
 An idiot's dream is perfect for his brain:
 Worthless and good for nothing, all in vain.
 Women's dreams too are less than men's, O listener,
 Because their souls and brains as well are lesser.
 Dreams of the less intelligent lack value:
 Their dreams are just hot air instead, I tell you.
 'The gold's in my own house,' the searcher said,
 'Why am I feeling sorry here instead?
 I nearly died through begging while it's there
 At my home! I was veiled and unaware.'
 This good news made him drunk; pain disappeared.
 He sent God many praises as it cleared:
 'My food required that I be beaten sore.
 The Water of Life was in my own store.
 I've struck upon a marvellous treat, no less,
 Confounding the thought I was penniless.
 Whether you think me stupid or too base,
 I'm that—say what you wish now to my face!
 I have attained my wish without doubt—you
 Can call me, foul-mouthed one, what you want to.
 Call me pain-filled, fine one! I am pain-filled
 With you, but I'm so happy and fulfilled!
 If it had been the opposite, that's worse:
 My soul a rose to you, to me a curse!'

4330

4335

4340

Parable

One day a wretch said to a dervish near:

‘Hey, no one knows who you are over here.’

He answered, ‘Though the vulgar may not see

I know myself who I am fortunately.

Much worse if it had been the opposite

And I were blind to myself, wouldn’t it?’

‘View me as dumb,’ the treasure seeker said,

‘But I have luck, which beats being mean instead.

Your talk comes from conjecture only, while

My luck’s from Wisdom’s justice. Hence, I smile.’

That person returns rejoicing and having attained his wish, thanking God and prostrating and feeling amazed at the marvellous indications shown by God and the appearance of interpretations of them that are beyond intellectual and conventional understanding.

He then left Cairo for Baghdad, prostrating,

4350

Bowing and thanking God, Whom he kept praising,

Stunned by this marvel and drunk all the way

By how his search had turned around that day:

‘How did He make me hopeful? How did He

Give coins and profit so abundantly?

What was the wisdom? What I sought to find

Made me leave home so happy and yet blind

Such that I took the wrong path and became

Each moment further from my actual aim.

God kindly made my waywardness not vain,

4355

But the right path to guidance and much gain.’

He makes being lost the path to true faith and

Corruption goodness’s own nurturing land.

Thus, no good man will lack fear and no traitor

Will lack hope that things turn out better later.

He put the antidotes in poisons too—

As ‘*Lord of Hidden Grace*’, He’s known to you.

His gifts are linked to ritual prayer, we tell,

But His forgiveness honours sin as well.

Deniers wished to mock good men who prayed,
But they gained might with miracles displayed.
Their aim was to belittle their religion:
Abasement changed for Prophets to dominion.
If wicked ones had not denied what's here
Why then did proofs and miracles appear?
Why would the judge show evidence if not
Because his foe asked him for what he's got?

4360

Miracles are like pure proofs, ending doubt
The claimant's telling all the truth sought out.
God gave us miracles and His own soothing
Since ignorant men were all disapproving.
Pharaoh's tricks were three hundredfold—all led
To his abasement, being struck on the head:
He brought magicians, good and bad, just to
Prove Moses's own miracle untrue,
To make his rod seem void and blameworthy,
Remove from hearts respect and sympathy.*
Those plots were Moses's own evidence—
They helped increase his own staff's eminence.
Pharaoh led his troops to the Nile to try
To waylay Moses's men passing by—
Safety came to the latter through that threat.
Pharaoh got buried soon too, don't forget!
If Moses had not come or been met here
How could the Jews have then been freed from fear?
Instead he came and all the Jews faced woe,
For safety's found in fear, as you should know.
It's Hidden Grace that God brings to his sight
As fire, although in actual fact it's light.
Rewarding goodness is not an enigma,
But the magicians gained despite their error:
Union through nurture is found in all lands,
But He gave it through chopping off their hands;
Travelling on foot is well anticipated,
But the magicians' legs were amputated.*
The mystics are safe though eternally,

4365

4370

4375

For they have travelled through a blood-filled sea.
By facing fear they found security
And they make further gains continually.
See safety found in fear! It really can,
And fear can be concealed in hope, good man.

4380

A prince was once pursuing Jesus, who
Hid in his home to be safe once he knew.
He entered there to wear his crown—what loss:
Looking like Jesus he died on the cross:*

‘I am not Jesus. I am the Emir!
Don’t crucify me! I like Jews! You hear?’
‘Nail him more quickly on the cross, for he
Is Jesus really—he’s just trying to flee.’
How many armies march for triumph, then
See their stock turn to spoils for raiding men?
Traders seek profit as each witness knows:
Hoping for feasts, they burn just like aloes.
So often things turn out the opposite:
Feared poison’s honey once you’ve tasted it.
Many troops thought they’d not get out alive
Only for glorious triumph to arrive.

4385

Abraha came with elephant to Mecca
To make the living dead around the Kaaba,
And to destroy it, leaving it effaced,
And make all people living there displaced,
So pilgrims would no longer gather there,
But make his kaaba the new niche for prayer,
All for revenge on Arabs through his ire:

4390

‘Why did they set my kaaba then on fire?’*
He made the Kaaba great with what he tried—
It caused that building to be glorified;
The Meccans’ glory rose one hundredfold
And till the Final Day it is extolled.

Abraha and his kaaba left no trace—
Where does this come from? Destiny’s own grace.
Abraha turned into a savage then—
His trappings turned poor Arabs to rich men.

4395

Thinking he led an army, truth be told,
To people of That House he had brought gold.

The treasure-seeker, each step of the way,
Saw how his wishes had been turned away.
When he went home he found the treasure there
And thus God's Grace took care of his affair.

The two brothers repeat their advice to the eldest, but he is unable to endure it and runs away from them. He enters the king's court, frenzied and witless, without permission but out of an excess of love rather than brazenness and recklessness.

His brothers told him, 'In our souls there are
Many rebuttals, one for every star.
If we don't speak, the game then will be lost;
If we speak, your heart hurting is the cost.
Like frogs in water, it hurts if we speak,
But silence suffocates and makes us sick.
If we don't speak, our friendship will be lacking;
If we speak, it will not be to your liking.'
He got up right then: 'Goodnight family!
The world's just full of playthings now to me.'

4400

Like arrows from a bow, he then leapt out,
So there was no chance for them to speak out.
He went to China's king then drunkenly
And kissed the ground before him fervently.
To that king all his feelings were in view
From first to last, his grief and tumult too.
Sheep are preoccupied in their own pasture,
The shepherd is informed though of their nature.
'You are all shepherds'*—Prophets have insight
On which of their flock graze and which ones fight.
Though he seemed different outwardly at least,
He fitted like a drum at a big feast.
He knew of burning inside those who'd visit,
But it was better not to then divulge it.

4405

4410

That lofty one saw in their souls, yet he
Acted a stranger still deliberately.
In form the fire's beneath the cooking pot;
Its meaning's in the pot's soul, which gets hot.
The form outside, meaning within again;
The soul's Beloved's like blood in your vein.

The prince then knelt before the king of China;
Announcers introduced him to their emperor.
Although the king knew it already, they
Performed their palace duty anyway.
One ray of mystic light is worth much more
Than such announcers outside by the score.
If you depend on hearing the announcer
That is a sign you're veiled still with conjecture.
Anyone who has the heart's eye to see
Observes with it *the clearest certainty*.
Transmitted knowledge cannot satisfy;
His certain knowledge comes from the heart's eye.

Then the announcer working for the king
Stood up before him and shared everything:
'King, he has fallen prey to all your kindness.
He can't escape—be like a king, your highness.
He grabbed your kingdom's saddle-straps, so please
Stroke this man's drunken head, put him at ease!'
'This young man will receive,' the king replied,
'All honours he requests, and multiplied.
I'll give him twenty times the kingdom he
Relinquished, adding myself too for free.'
'Since our king sowed his love in him, then how
Could he feel passion for another now?
Slavery to you suits him so much that he
Has lost all interest in his monarchy:
He gambled his own royal claim away
To settle here for you so far away.'

A Sufi who threw his cloak down, ecstatic—
How could he go back for it now in panic,

4415

4420

4425

Regretting that he threw it on the floor, 4430
 Saying, 'I was bamboozled then before—
 Give back that cloak of mine now, my dear friend!
 Throwing it wasn't worth it in the end.'
 Far be it from a lover to think thus!
 Shame on a lover if he ever does!
 Love's worth a hundred bodily cloaks and more,
 For love has life and wisdom too galore,
 And worldly power's cloak especially—
 Headaches come from being drunk on that. You'll see.
 Worldly power's for body worshippers; 4435
 We are Eternal Love's realm's worshippers.
 He is love's worker. Don't deny him that!
 Don't busy him with anything but that!
 If my rank veils me from your face, through name
 And honour, it's a huge loss all the same.

They said, 'The reason he came so late here
 Was lack of readiness and skills. That's clear.'
 If you go in a mine without being ready
 You won't find any nugget there, not any.
 An impotent man with a virgin now 4440
 Cannot enjoy her fully anyhow.
 A lamp with no oil nor wick won't shine bright
 Because it cannot fuel flames that give light.
 Someone whose nose can't smell at all once went
 To the herb garden, but smelt not one scent.
 A lovely sweetheart with a novice lover,
 The harp's sound for a deaf man—they are similar,
 Like a land bird when entering the ocean—
 What can it find there but death and commotion?
 Like one at the mill without wheat at all— 4445
 He gains naught, just gets messy overall.
 Heaven's mill gives to those who don't bring wheat
 Old age and weakness rather than a treat,
 But gives to those who bring wheat as they should
 A kingdom as a gift with all that's good—
 You need to be prepared for heaven too,

So that new life should come from there to you.
For babies how can wine and roasted meat
Or palaces and domes be deemed a treat?
These parables have no end, so talk less!
Go forth and now acquire your readiness!

4450

They then said, 'Waiting to be ready first
Meant that this prince by then had so much thirst!'
The prince said, 'Being prepared comes from the king—
Without soul body can't gain anything.'
Grace from the king put all his grief away;
He came to hunt him and became his prey.
'Hunters like you', then the announcer said,
'Don't win until they're hunted out instead.
Whoever seeks to rule will certainly
Become a captive prior to victory.'
The front contrasts with the back of the world.
This world's slave gets called 'master of the world.'

4455

O body, you are so perverse and evil;
You have enslaved a million of the people.
Stop plotting like this for a while and spend
At least some moments free before the end!
If, donkey-like, you can't reach freedom, then
Like buckets you'll go down the well again.
So go away and leave my soul! Go, find
A new companion of a different kind!
My turn is over, so now set me free!
Marry whomever you want, just not me!
Distracted body, leave me now! Begone!
You stole my life—find someone else! Move on!

4460

A judge becomes infatuated with Johi's wife and hides in a trunk. The deputy judge buys the trunk. The following year Johi's wife comes back hoping to play the same trick as in the previous year. The judge says, 'Set me free and seek someone else!' etc. to the end of the story.

Because of poverty Johi each year

Would cunningly turn to his wife: 'My dear,
You have the weapon, so go hunt today,
So we can get some milk now from your prey!
Why else did God give you those eyebrows then,
Your flirting's arrow and your snare for men?
For a large bird put out a snare to catch it!
Show him the bait, but do not let him have it!
Disappoint after showing him what's there!
He can't eat it when captured in the snare.'

4465

His wife went to the judge immediately:
'I've seen my husband's infidelity.'
To make it brief, the judge fell prey right there
To her speech and her looks. She was so fair.
He said, 'There's too much noise here for me to
Make out well the complaint that's brought by you—
O cypress, if we could meet privately
You can explain his infidelity.'

4470

She then replied, 'Your house will have noise too
From all the plaintiffs who are seeking you.'
If the head's house becomes filled up with passion
The breast gets filled with uproar and suspicion,
But the rest of the body stays clean still;
Feelings wear out the breasts. They always will.
Flee to Autumn and the wind of the fear

4475

Of God—scatter the flowers of last year!
These flowers block new buds that should appear,
Which are the reason why the heart's tree's here.
So put to bed this kind of thought! Think less
And lift your head from sleep to wakefulness!
Just like the seven sleepers, rush in keeping
To wakefulness, though *they thought they were sleeping*.*

The judge said, 'What can be done, lovely lady?'
She said, 'Our handmaid's house seems to be empty.
The foe is out of town, the guard away:
For privacy this is the place to stay.
If possible come over there tonight;
Nobody hears or sees what's done at night.

4480

At night the spies are dead drunk with sleep's wine—

Night's negro chops their heads off, so it's fine.'

That sugar-lipped one cast a wondrous spell

Over the judge, and with such lips as well!

Satan talked much to Adam, but he ate

Only when Eve had told him to by fate.

Bloodshed began in this corrupt world when,

4485

Due to a woman, Cain killed. Then again

When Noah cooked some meat his wife would throw

Stones at the pot, and we've all come to know

His wife's tricks then prevailed above his work—

His purest preaching's water then turned dark.

She would send hidden messages to say: 'Save your faith from these ones who've gone astray!'

The judge goes to the house of Johi's wife; Johi bangs on the door in a rage and the judge hides in a trunk etc.

A woman's guile is limitless. At night

The judge went to that woman, out of sight.

She'd made desserts and lit two candles too:

4490

He said, 'Without a drink I'm drunk on you!'

Johi came knocking on the door right then;

The judge sought somewhere that could hide grown men.

He could find nothing but a large trunk near

And so he climbed inside it out of fear.

Johi entered and said, 'O spouse, you bring

Me plague in both the autumn and the spring!

What haven't I yet sacrificed for you

That you should scream at me the way you do?

You've moaned about a lack of food and water.

4495

You've called me both a "cuckold" and a "pauper",

But if, my dear, I suffer from these two

One is from God, the other one from you!

Apart from that trunk what's in my possession

To be a source of somebody's suspicion?

People imagine I have gold inside it,

So when I seek aid they will not provide it.
The trunk looks beautiful on the outside;
It has no gold or money though inside,
Like false men who look noble, but are fakes—
Inside their baskets all you'll find are snakes.

4500

I'll take that trunk tomorrow to the street
And burn it on the crossroads where all meet,
So each believer and each infidel

Sees all it held was a curse worse than hell.'
'Don't do that, husband!' Johi's wife then said.

He swore he would: 'I will proceed ahead!'
He brought a porter to move it away

By lifting it on his back straight away.
Inside the trunk, the judge made threats; he'd shout:

4505

'Hey porter, stop! You wait till I get out!'
The porter looked left and right, all around
To find the origin of all that sound:
'Is it a voice that's calling me from yonder
Or fairies secretly for me, I wonder?'

The shouts increased and then became continuous.

He thought, 'That's not from yonder!' Then, more conscious,
He figured out the shouting, groans, and din
Came from the trunk, where someone had gone in.

The lover with love's grief has gone inside

4510

The trunk though love is standing there outside—
Inside grief's trunk he wastes his life away

And sees naught in the world too, come what may:
The head that doesn't look above the sky

Is stuck in lust's trunk as the days pass by,
And when he leaves the body's trunk, he'll go
From one grave to another grave below.

This discourse has no end. The judge then said:

'O carrier of the judge, won't you instead
Inform my deputy, a trusty man,

4515

About my state as quickly as you can,
So he can buy this from that man who's brainless
And take it to my house, still sealed shut like this.'

O God, appoint a mystic group to free
All of us from the trunk that's bodily.
Who can redeem but Prophets serving God
People who're trapped still in the trunk of fraud?
Out of thousands just one has sight to see
That he's inside the trunk and should now flee,
Having once seen the real world prior to it
To know that this is the vile opposite—
'Knowledge: lost camel of believers'*—they
Can tell their own lost camel clear as day.
If someone's not seen a good day before
How can he get upset by woe in store?
Either they kidnapped him as child or he
Was born to slavery through his family—
His soul has never tasted freedom, so
The trunk of forms is his own place below—
His mind imprisoned in forms constantly,
He moves from cage to cage perpetually.
He lacks the means to leave this cage for yonder,
So he will pass from one cage to another:
'If you can, pass beyond!'* says the Qur'an.
This came from Him to both the Jinn and Man.
God said, 'You lack a way beyond the heavens
Except through My will and communications.'

4520

4525

If someone goes from trunk to trunk, then he
Is of the trunk, not heaven, obviously.
Lust for the trunk intoxicates him, so
He doesn't know he's stuck in it below.
If he is not seduced by these trunks, he
Just like the judge, will try hard to break free.
The sign of one who knows this is quite clear—
You'll find that he is groaning out of fear.
Just like the judge he trembles, soul unable
To breathe with joy one breath while he's unstable.

4530

The judge's deputy comes to the bazaar and buys the trunk from Johi etc.

‘How much for your trunk?’ asked the deputy.

‘More than nine hundred gold coins,’ said Johi,

‘Some offered that. A thousand will suffice.

If you want it, pay up the asking price!’

The deputy said, ‘Lowlife, shame on you!

That price for this trunk clearly isn’t true.’

‘Purchasing without viewing isn’t right,’

Johi said, ‘That’s corrupt; one must have sight—
I’ll open it—if it’s not worth it, then

Don’t buy it! Don’t get cheated like dumb men!’

‘Do not reveal the secret!’ he then said,

‘I’ll buy it packed just as it is instead.’

Conceal so you might be concealed as well!

Don’t mock until you are secure and well!

Many like you stayed in this trunk before

And landed themselves in much greater woe.

Harm others if you must in ways that you

Approve of later being harmed thus too,

For God is lying in wait and you’ll pay

The recompense before its Judgement Day.

His Mighty Throne encompasses us all;

His Justice’s Throne covers every soul.

A corner of His Throne is joined with you—

Act just for faith and justice that is true!

First watch your own states and then you might witness

Honey in justice, stings where there’s injustice.

Johi said, ‘I was wrong with that before,

But he who started it was wrong much more.’

‘Some of us start things,’ said the deputy,

‘We have a black face, though we’re filled with glee,
Like Africans when they are happy too—

Others can see their faces; they don’t do!’

The bargaining was drawn out and not fast.

He bought it for one hundred coins at last.

You who like evil, in the trunk always—

Celestial voices save you from your ways.

4535

4540

4545

4550

*Exegesis of the tradition reporting that the Prophet Mohammad said,
‘Whomever I am lord over, Ali is also lord over him’, at which the
hypocrites grew sarcastic: ‘It didn’t suffice him that we obey and serve
him, so he orders service also to a child who can’t wipe his own nose!’**

Our Prophet for this reason famously
Would call himself ‘lord’ and the great Ali.
He said, ‘All over whom I am their lord
And their beloved, Ali too is lord.’
What is a lord? The one who sets you free,
Who takes off fetters of your slavery.
Prophethood is the guide to liberty;
Believers thus through Prophets get set free.

4555

Rejoice, believers! Be free without fear
Just like the lily and the cypress here—
Do you give thanks each moment for your waters
Silently like the garden with its colours?
Without tongue both the meadow and the cypress
Give thanks for water and for springtime’s justice,
Wearing robes with hems trailing them back there,
Drunk, dancing, merry, perfuming the air.
Water fills every part thanks to spring’s king,
Their bodies hold fruits like pearls, shimmering,
Like Mary without husband bearing Jesus,
Silent ones without boasts or speech to please us.
‘Our moon without speech has beamed light,’ they say,
‘All tongues gained speech from our light through this way,
As Jesus’s speech comes from Mary’s splendour,
And Adam’s from That Breath of The Creator.’
O trusty man, your thinking grows—that’s why
The plants in nature too will multiply.
‘Content ones are abased’—it’s topsy turvy.
‘The cravers are exalted’, backward truly.
Don’t enter the self’s sack so frequently
And don’t forget your buyers heedlessly!

4560

4565

For a second year Johi's wife returns to the judge's courthouse in the hope of the same money as the previous year. The judge recognizes her, and so on until the conclusion.

Due to much hardship, Johi the next year
Told his wife, 'You are very clever, dear,
So carry out last year's scheme once again:
Go and complain now to that judge of men!'
His wife, with others standing next to her,
Made one of them her own interpreter,
So the judge wouldn't hear her voice once more
And thus recall past trouble from before.
A woman's flirting glances are seductive,
But her voice made them even more attractive.
She couldn't make a sound, but lacking it
Her glance alone was of no benefit.
The judge said, 'Bring me the defendant now,
So I can settle your dispute somehow.'
Johi came, but the judge could not tell yet
Because he'd been in that trunk when they'd met:
He'd heard his voice from outside while inside
When the transaction was being ratified.
The judge said, 'Why not give your wife her pay?'
He said, 'I follow each law all the way,
But if I die now there's no shroud for me—
I'm penniless in life's game tragically.'
The judge could tell from his speech who it was
And he recalled the trick that caused him loss:
He said, 'You played that game last year with me:
You left me trapped, unable then to flee.
So try your game on someone else who's prone—
My turn is over so leave me alone!'

4570

4575

4580

The mystic is beyond the five and six;
He's wary of backgammon blocks and tricks.*
He's fled five senses and the six directions,
And let you know of what's beyond dimensions.
His teachings are eternal teachings too:

He has transcended thoughts since he withdrew.
 If not outside six-sided wells, how then
 Can he pull Josephs up from them again?
 Transcending heavens which lack any pillar, 4585
 His body's like a pail in wells however
 To help—onto his pail Joseph will cling,
 From the well to be an Egyptian king.
 Other pails pull out water from the well—
 His seeks out friends who're trapped down there as well.
 Others plunge there for food—that is their role;
 His pail is life for every fish's soul.
 Others are tied up to the lofty wheel,
 His is to the *two fingers* of The Real.*
 What pail? What rope? What wheel do you intend? 4590
 This is a weak comparison, my friend.
 Where can I get one that's not flimsy now?
 One that suffices won't come anyhow.
 A million men concealed in one, within;
 A hundred bows and arrows in one pin.
 'You did not throw when you threw'* —that's so powerful.
 A million stacks of hay are just a handful.
 A sun inside a mote, which suddenly
 Opens its mouth for the whole world to see.
 The heavens and earth turn to smithereens 4595
 When that sun leaps out from behind he scenes.
 How can a body suit a soul so rare?
 Wash your hands of this soul and please beware!
 O body, you're the soul's house now—I ask:
 How long can the sea live inside a flask?
 A thousand Gabriels in a man like you
 And many Jesuses in donkeys too.
 Hidden in churches or a thousand Kaabas,
 You who lead devils even into errors!
 Worship-site beyond place inside a space, 4600
 You ruin devils' shops without a trace.
 They say, 'Why should I serve one made of clay?
 Why should I worship something in this way?'*
 He's not the form. Rub your eyes well, so you

May see His Glory's radiance shining through.

*Return to the explanation of the story about the prince and his abiding
with the king.*

The prince, bewildered in the ruler's presence,
Saw in a handful of clay seven heavens.
To mention it his lips could not be opened,
But their souls weren't silent for a moment.
He thought it was a most strange mystery:
'What's form for when there's much reality?'
It is a form that frees you from form really,
A sleeper who wakes those asleep more deeply.
Those words free you from words, that sickness too
Provides escape from sickness worse for you.
Love's sickness is the soul of health—it's obvious:
Its pains make even pleasures feel so envious.
Body, wash your hands off this soul right now!
If you can't, seek a different soul somehow!

4605

In short, the king was nice to him and he
Melted, like moon in sun, so readily.
Melting away of lovers is growth really:
The moon wanes then it waxes similarly.
All the sick people just want to get well,
But 'Make my sickness worse!' these ones will yell.
No drink is sweeter than the poison here,
No health beats this sick state. Let me be clear:
This sin is better than to be obedient,
Years are one hour compared with this rare moment.
He stayed a while with that king in this state,
His heart kebab, his soul served on a plate.
'The king beheads each subject once,' he said,
'For me it is each moment though instead.
I'm poor in gold, but rich in heads, you'll find:
My head has millions more of them behind.
No one can play love's game with just one head,
Nor run with their two feet to love ahead—

4610

4615

One head and two feet on most men you meet,
It's rare to have one thousand heads and feet!
Fighting is pointless for this very reason,
But every moment heats up the commotion.'
The source of heat's in Placelessness, my friends;
The seven hells are smoke from sparks it sends.

4620

Explaining why hell says when the bridge Seraat is placed over it: 'O believer, pass more quickly over Seraat! Hurry up so the greatness of your light does not put out our fire:

O believer, pass across for your light has put out my fire!'

It's for this reason hell's weak and put out
By love's fire, sincere one who is devout.
Hell tells him: 'Noble man, pass quickly by
Or else, due to your flames, my fire will die.'
This flame breath melts all infidelity,
Which is hell's brimstone. You should rapidly
Entrust your brimstone to this breath as well,
So hell can't burn you, nor the sparks from hell.
'Pass like the wind,' by heaven he is told,
'Or everything I have will not get sold!
I'm just one handful; you are the whole stack.
I'm one fair one, you China's total pack.'
Both heaven and hell tremble due to him;
Neither of them can feel secure from him.

4625

The prince died without chance of remedy,
For bearing it was too much agony:
While gnashing his teeth, he endured the pains.
His life would end before he could make gains,
For the beloved's form had stayed concealed—
He died and joined Him, then He was revealed.
'I noticed clothes of fine cloth,' he then stated,
'But best is His embrace unmediated.
I'm naked, He is free from fantasy.
I'm happy for this union finally.'

4630

Only this much of this state can be written
And anything beyond it must stay hidden.
Though with a million efforts and much strain,
It never will get clear. That's all in vain.
You journey on horse to the sea, good men,
But you need wooden boats to travel then.
That wooden boat is useless on land though;
It's for those on the sea alone, you know.
The wooden vessel is this silence and
It teaches travellers on the sea, not land.
Each silent one who makes you weary here
Shouts cries of love beyond this lower sphere.
'Why is he silent?' you are wondering.
He wonders, 'Where's his ear for listening?
My yelling made me deaf, but he heard nothing?
Sharp-eared ones do not hear this kind of talking.
One yells in his sleep, giving many lessons
To teach you things with lots of clear discussions.
One next to him stays unaware: that slow one
Is the asleep one, deaf to the commotion.
The one whose wooden ship is wrecked has now
Plunged in the sea. He is a fish somehow.
Neither silent, nor talking, he is rare.
There's no word to describe his state out there.
He is neither yet both amazingly.
Explaining this would be indecency!
Such weak companions are then bound to falter,
But in the world of senses there's none better.

4635

4640

4645

The death of the eldest prince and the arrival of the middle brother to his funeral while the youngest brother is bedridden. The king pampers the middle brother until he too gets paralysed by his kindness and stays with the king, and a hundred thousand gifts from the Unseen and seen worlds reach him through the fortune and spiritual attention of the king, with an explanation of a part thereof.

The youngest brother was sick, so the other
Came to the funeral of their oldest brother.

The king saw him, 'Who is this facing me
Who also is a fish from the same sea?'

Then the announcer said, 'From the same father,
This man is the late prince's younger brother.'

The king said, 'You remind of him.' This way,
By being nice, he made him, too, his prey.

Due to the way the king would then console
He burned and found inside a loftier soul.

Inside his heart such fervour he then gained
That Sufis on retreat have not attained.

Walls and mountains of solid rock would then split
Before him like the ripest pomegranate.

Each atom opened its doors to him too
Each moment in ways some cupolas do.

Doors turned to windows, then sun rays—we see
The soil become wheat too amazingly.

The heavens look so old to men, and worn;
His eyes saw new creations being born.

When the fair spirit flees the body, then
Such an eye will by fate arrive for men.

He saw a million unseen entities,
The things that one initiated sees.

He opened his eyes to the objects there,
Which he had read about before somewhere.

The dust from that king's horse took on a function:
Providing precious kohl to boost his vision.

He strolled inside the garden, his hem trailing;

4650

4655

4660

'Is there more?' every part of him was wailing.

Flowers from plants last just a moment, though

Fresh always are flowers which from wisdom grow.

The flowers grown in soil will always wither;

Flowers grown in the heart are joys forever.

Great sciences that we know and work hard in

4665

Are just a bunch or two picked from that garden.

These one or two flower bunches captivate

Since we've shut on ourselves That Garden's gate.

Alas, O soul, that such keys drop each moment

From your hand due to greed that is so potent.

And if freed for a moment from that greed

You're lusting after women. Please take heed!

When dropsy starts you feel need in your head

For a town full of women and warm bread!

You were a snake and you've become a dragon.

4670

You had one head before and now you've seven.

Hell is a seven-headed dragon, where

Your greed's the bait and hellfire is the snare.

Break the snare, burn the bait and open up

New doors in this house and do not give up!

You just have echoes like a mountain, beggar,

Remaining clueless since you're not a lover.

How can a mountain talk itself, dear fellow?

The sound is obviously another's echo.

Your speech is just another's echo too,

4675

Your states naught but reflections inside you,

Your rage and joy reflections from some others

Like the police's rage, joy of procurers.

What did the poor man do to the police

That he should now be punished without cease?

How long will such reflections fill your head?

Strive to make it reality instead,

So your speech flows from your own inner state

And you fly with your own wings—do not wait!

The arrow strikes prey with another's feather,

4680

So it has no share of *the bird's flesh* ever.
 The falcon though itself brings its own prey
 And so the king lets it eat them all day.
 Speech that is not inspired is from desire
 Like dust in the air and motes floating higher.
 If to the good man's ear this sounds erroneous
 Recite from the Qur'an *The Star's* first verses*
 Starting from '*He speaks not from his desire*'*
 Till '*It's from God who chose thus to inspire.*'*
 Ahmad,* for inspiration you hold hope—
 Non-mystics need analogies to cope.
 For carcasses are lawful when they're needed;*
 In Union's Kaaba study is not needed.

4685

Whoever falsely innovates through lust
 Without hard work and research one can trust
 Will, like the Aad, be killed, as he is prone,
 Not Solomon for wind to drag his throne.*
 The wind was for the Aad a treacherous porter—
 Like lambs in gluttons' hands, brought to the slaughter.
 Like his own child he seats him by his side,
 Then, like a butcher, slaughters him outside.
 The Aad's own arrogance made that wind blow;
 They thought it their friend, but it was a foe—
 It turned its coat around so suddenly;
 That evil one crushed them for all to see.
 Defeat the wind for it's a trouble-maker,
 Before, as with the Aad, it is your breaker.
 'O arrogant tribe,' Hud warned them no less,

4690

'The wind will tear from you what you possess!'
 The wind is God's troops and in their false ways
 Embraced you earlier for a few days.
 It's true to its creator secretly;
 It will end its embrace so suddenly.
 See how the wind goes through the mouth, now forwards,
 Coming and going always, even backwards.
 The throat and teeth are safe from it, however;
 If God commands, it will attack with terror—

4695

A puff of wind turns mountain-strong again;
 Toothache makes victims suffer so much pain.
 The same wind would pass harmlessly before 4700
 As life for crops, but now their death's in store.
 The hand of someone who would kiss your hand
 Becomes a mace when anger should command.
 He cries from his soul, 'O Lord, take away
 This wind, O Rescuer, please right away!
 Mouth, you were heedless of this wind before—
 Go and beg for forgiveness now some more!
 His hard eyes shed so many raindrop tears—
 Pain makes deniers cry to God from fears. 4705
 You've not received a holy man's breath, so
 Receive God's inspiration through more woe!
 The wind says, 'I have come from Mankind's King—
 Sometimes good news, sometimes bad news I bring.
 For I'm commanded, not my own commander—
 When am I heedless like you of my emperor?
 If your state were like that of Solomon
 I would have carried you, but that's not on.
 I am on loan; I'd have become your own,
 And I'd have made my secrets also known,
 But you're rebellious. I'm on loan and serve 4710
 For just a few days—that's all you deserve.
 Therefore, as with the Aad, I'll devastate you
 And, as a rebel from your troops, escape you,
 So in the Unseen you'll have firm belief
 When your faith forms out of your personal grief.'
 That's when they all become believing men;
 Even the headstrong will come over then.
 They'll weep and beg so meekly for relief
 As if they're at the gibbet, tried as thief.
 If you become strong in the Unseen realm, 4715
 You'll own both worlds and be policing them.
 Lasting kingship and leading the police
 Are not just loaned for days—they never cease.
 You're then delivered from strife and can do
 Whatever you want, king—bring your drum too!

When the world squeezes our throats we then groan
 If only our throats ate just mud alone—
 This mouth of mine has been a mud-devourer,
 But mud that had been touched up with much colour.
 All these kebabs, this sugar and this wine 4720
 Are just embellished mud, dear friend of mine.
 Once eaten, they become your flesh and skin—
 He gives flesh colour; it's mud to begin.
 From street mud he makes bodies of all men
 And then returns it to the soil again.
 Indians, Turks, Greeks, and Africans, my brother,
 Are in the grave exactly the same colour,
 So you know images and colours too
 Are borrowed masks and thus misleading you.
 The lasting colour is *God's dye** as well— 4725
 View others as tied on just like a bell.
 Colours of truth and of sincerity
 Will last for worshippers eternally.
 The colour of doubt, unbelief, and falseness
 Will last in souls that challenge truth, rebellious.
 Like Pharaoh's shame and black face in the past—
 His body rots, that colour though will last.
 Fair faces of the truthful are so radiant:
 Though bodies rot, they last till the Last Judgement.
 Beauty's from Him and ugliness as well; 4730
 The latter frowns, the former smiles. We tell.
 He gives dust both a colour and a value
 And childish men fight over it, I tell you.
 A camel or lion shape is baked in dough—
 Children will crave them wildly, but not know
 That in their mouths both turn to bread the same—
 It's pointless to tell them and spoil their game.
 The child lacks knowledge, filled with fancies, doubt—
 Thank God he lacks strength, so there is no rout.
 The child's a troublemaker—thankfully 4735
 He lacks from God strength and ability.
 Alas for grown-up children among men—
 Their strength makes them a bane on us all then.

Weapons and ignorance in unity:

Pharaoh burns this world through his tyranny.
Thank God you lack the means, poor man—you're neither
A wicked Pharaoh or an unbeliever—
And you're oppressed, not the source of oppression,
Secure from being like Pharaoh with dissension.

Empty stomachs don't claim divinity—

4740

They lack fuel for their fire most obviously.
The empty stomach is the devil's prison;
Stress over food prevents his sly persuasion.
With fine food it's the devil's market place—
His merchants cause commotion and disgrace.
Merchants selling nothing, each one a sorcerer,
They just confuse the people with their clamour.
They make a vat run like a horse through sorcery
And make cloth out of moonlight too—it's trickery.
They weave mud just like silk to mesmerize
And throw dust on to men's discerning eyes.
They make cheap wood look precious and vice versa.
They make us crave some mud—what could be viler!
God gives mud colour to embellish it—
Like children we then wrestle over it.
We think a skirtful of soil is pure gold;
We're children even though we may be old.
The child can't mix with grown-ups—that's an insult!
How could God let a child sit with an adult.

4745

If a fruit doesn't ripen but grows old,

4750

It's like unripened grapes that still get sold.
That sour, unripened one may have lived long,
But stays a child and unripe grape, not strong.
His beard may be white, but despite the years,
He's still a child led by his hopes and fears,
Wondering: 'Will I mature or not? Let's see
If the vine ends up being kind to me!'
Though I'm unworthy and so distant now
Will He let my grapes ripen anyhow?

I get no sign of hope from anywhere

Yet That Most Generous One says, '*Don't despair!*'*

Our King prepares a feast for us always

And pulls our ears—'*Do not despair!*' He says.*

Although we're in a ditch due to despair,

Since He invited us, let's dance in there

Like lively horses galloping now to

A meadow that's familiar to you!

Let's jump off though there are no feet in there!

Let's drain the jug though no jug's here to share

Because such things are spiritual, you see—

They're inner layers of inner reality.

4760

Form's shadow, meaning sunshine—it is known

Shadowless light's in ruined zones alone—

Since no brick's stacked on other bricks, there's no

Shadow to see despite the moonlight's glow.

Golden bricks even have to go—their value

Gets paid by light and inspiration for you.

To stop such shadows mountains will be razed—

For This Light that's not much. Don't be amazed!

Eternal Light shone on the mountainside—

That crumbled so The Light would reach inside.

If bread should reach the hungry hands, their eyes

And mouths would open up wide in surprise.

Shattering to smithereens is worth it, earth!

Soar up now through the sky to know your worth!

So heaven's light consumes your shadow there!

Night, day's foe, is your shadow everywhere.

4765

The earth is like a baby's cradle—it

Is far too cramped for grown-up men to fit.

God's given this world 'cradle' as its label.

He's given milk to babies in the cradle.

Such cradles leave the houses cluttered up,

O King, please let the babies soon grow up!

Cradle, don't clutter up the house—watch out!

Leave room for grown-ups in there to stretch out.

4770

The doubts that arose in the prince due to the self-sufficiency and illumination which his heart had acquired from the king, and his moving to show ingratitude and rebelliousness, and how the king became informed of it through secret inspiration, how it pained his heart and wounded the prince's spirit, although outwardly he seemed unaware.

When, from the king's soul, wages transferred to

This prince's soul without a job to do,

His moon-like soul then fed on the king's light,

As the moon feeds off sunlight to turn bright.

Spiritual rations from the king arrived

4775

Each moment in his drunk soul and he thrived,

Not what the polytheists consume as treat

But the same food that lofty angels eat.

He sensed a self-sufficiency within

And turned rebellious then due to this sin:

'I am a prince myself and each soon reigns!

How did I give to their king my own reins?

A radiant moon has risen now for me—

Why should I follow mere dust slavishly?

My stream has water—I should show disdain,

4780

Not take that from another! Why bear strain?

Why bandage up my head when there's no ache

Or tears or pale face? That's a big mistake!

I'm sugar-lipped and my cheeks beam much more.

I need to open up myself a store!

His ego would inflate through self-conceit

And he had veiled thoughts from strange food he'd eat.

The evil eye can cross vast deserts too,

To take what it craves jealously from you.

All rivers flow to the king's ocean, so

4785

How could he not see torrents and not know?

In fact, this prince's thoughts left his heart pained

Due to ingratitude for all he'd gained.

The king thought, 'Base, ill-mannered man, was this

What I deserved for all my kindnesses?

How well I treated you with precious treasure!

How meanly you have treated me, you miser!
I placed a moon inside your breast as pay,
One which will not set until Judgement Day!

Yet you throw dust and thorns now at my eyes
For my bestowal of light? Is this my prize?

I was your ladder to the heavens—now

You've weapons firing at me anyhow.'

The king was hurt by this from his companion

And that prince sensed his pain from its reflection.
As he reproached him, his power's bird would flutter
And tear the barrier of retreat asunder.

That nice young man looked at himself and viewed

His shameful acts as dirty and so rude,
Since they showed kindness failed here once again

And happiness's house was filled with pain.

He came to his wits from the drunkenness

And had a hangover from sinfulness.

He'd eaten the forbidden fruit, lost honour,

And heaven turned to deserts for his future.

He sensed the drink had made him ill and also

The job was done by poison of the ego.

His soul had been a peacock in fine gardens

And now was just an owl in wildest ruins.

Like Adam banished from above, his hand

Was used for driving oxen ploughs on land.

He wept and 'Cunning infidel!' he'd wail,

'You've made the lion lose to a cow's tail!

O wicked self with cold breath, treachery

You showed although he gives you sanctuary.

You've chosen snares through your own greed for wheat,

Though that's a scorpion for you, not a treat!

The self's desire came in your head somehow—

Look at the shackles on your feet right now!'

He started mourning for his soul: 'Why me?

Why did I change to my king's enemy?'

When he came to himself he begged forgiveness

From God, and his contrition was relentless:

4790

4795

4800

4805

‘Take pity on one who’s lost faith—you’ll see
That pain I suffer has no remedy.
May no one put immaculate clothes on! When
Their suffering ends they seek pomp once again.
May no one have a fist or nails again!
They never think of faith or good deeds then.’
It’s better to get slain by suffering truly.
The self’s ungrateful for gifts and unruly.

4810

God addresses the Angel of Death, Azrael: ‘Whom did you pity most out of all the people whose souls you seized?’ Azrael’s answer to The Most Holy One.

‘Whom did you pity, Azrael?’ God said,
‘Of all those tragic ones who are now dead?’
He said, ‘My heart burns for them all till sore,
But I fear to neglect your orders more,
So I can’t wish for you to change Your will
And harm me rather than one I must kill.’
God asked again, ‘Whom did you pity most?
For whom was your heart really bleeding most?’
He said, ‘On Your command I totally
Destroyed a ship with waves from a wild sea:
“Take all those people’s lives!” you then commanded,
“Except one woman and her child who’re stranded
On a plank in the sea on that sad day
With waves still driving their small plank away!”
You then said, “Take the mother’s life for me,
But spare the child through my own order ‘Be!’”
On separating that child from its mother
You must know how it caused me then to suffer.
I’d witnessed sighs in mourning frequently,
But that child’s painful grief has not left me.’
God said, ‘I told the wave through My Own Grace
To toss that child into a better place,
A forest full of lilies, basil, rose
And fruit trees one can eat from when fruit grows,

4815

4820

And springs with pure, sweet water everywhere—

I nurtured that child with the utmost care.

Myriads of birds with voices that were sweet

Sang hundreds of songs there as that child's treat.

I made a couch for him from wild rose leaves.

4825

I made him safe from harm where no one grieves.

I told the scorching sun to not burn him.

I told the wind to softly waft on him.

"Don't rain on him!" I ordered then the cloud.

I told the lightning flashing's not allowed.

I told December, "Don't take temperate weather!"

And then November, "Don't harm this place either!"

The Miracles of Shaybaan the Shepherd, may God sanctify his dear spirit.*

Shaybaan the shepherd drew a line around

His flock at Friday prayer time. It was found

They wouldn't cross that line and wolves would not

4830

Enter inside it—this was a safe spot

Just like Hud's circle, which gave sanctuary

For people from the wind's ferocity:

'Stay inside here for eight days and observe

The punishment outside that it will serve!'

The wind raised up and then flung down again

On rocks which ripped apart the flesh of men—

It hurled the men against each other too;

Their bones were crushed like seeds then in plain view.

It's too much for *The Masnavi* to mention

4835

The punishment that even shook up heaven.

O icy winds if this power comes from you

Try doing this in Hud's drawn circle too!

If you deny that realm beyond, vain man,

Erase these verses then from the Qur'an!

Block the Qur'an-reciters! Have them banned

Or scare and punish teachers! Understand

Or are you helplessly confused today?

Your feeling is one ray from Judgement Day.
You have much helplessness in front of you,
Stubborn man, then the hidden comes to view.
Happy is he whom helplessness will nourish—
He rests in the Beloved's shade to flourish
Both here and in the other world, no less.
Now dead to self, his creed is helplessness.
Zolaykha saw in Joseph shining truth—
She found a path from dotage back to youth.
Life's found in death and suffering grief and harshness:
The Water of Life is found in the darkness.

4840

*Resumption of the story about God nurturing Nimrod in his childhood
without mother or nurse.*

'That garden like the mystic's own,' God said,
'Was safe from those harsh winds that filled with dread.
A leopard there had newborn cubs—I said:
"Give milk to Nimrod!" and she then obeyed:
She gave him milk and served him until he
Grew up a big, strong man eventually.
When he was weaned I told the fairies too:
"Teach him to talk and do the things you do!"
I nurtured him in that realm—how then could
My art be put in words when it's that good?
I gave to Job a father's love, so he
Would then be kind to worms, unusually.
I made the worms love Job just like their father—
Witness how much there is within my power!
And I taught mothers too how to bring up—
How great that kindness was that I lit up!
I showed such favours, tried to make connections,
So he could see directly my affections,
Not secondary causes that get shown,
So calls for help would be to me alone
And he'd have no excuse to just complain
Of bad companions pushing him again.

4845

4850

4855

He had this nurture with close care from me;
I raised him without intermediary.
His way of showing thanks was in the end
To try to burn great Abraham, my friend.’*
That’s like this prince, so proud and arrogant
He showed the king thanks through being insolent:
‘Why should I follow someone else when I
Have fortune and a kingdom? Tell me why!’
The kindnesses of that king, which we’ve told,
Were veiled from his heart as his pride took hold.

4860

God said, ‘Nimrod too trampled over kindness
Because of his sheer ignorance and blindness.
Misleading others as an infidel,
He even claims divinity as well.
Travelling up near glorious heaven, he
Brings down here vultures to start fighting Me.’
He slaughtered thousands of pure babies to
Find Abraham among them, listening to
Astrologers who had predicted he
Would have to fight a newborn enemy:
They said, ‘You must now block that foe!’ In vain
He killed each newborn then as if insane.
The God-inspired child would still get away
While blood on Nimrod’s hands showed guilt would stay.

4865

The king said, ‘Did he get it from his father
For lineage’s delusions that are harder?
Though parents are veils for some people, he
Obtained jewels in his pocket straight from me.’
The wicked self is a wild wolf for certain—
Why do you then instead blame each companion?
Like caps for bald heads, it is a deceiver,
This vile, cursed self, always a disbeliever.
That’s why I, a poor slave, suggest to all:
‘Don’t take the collar off the dog at all!’
Though it become a teacher, it’s still evil.
Be *one whose self’s brought low*,* discerning people!

4870

Circle one who's like Canopus at night—
You'll do a duty and gain so much light.
It will redeem from flesh's wickedness,
So you fit the Beloved's side, no less.
The whole Qur'an exposes the self's lies.
Look at that holy book! Open your eyes!
It says the self supported the Aad's battle
Against the Prophets using all their mettle.
Generations of the self's iniquity
Set the whole world on fire thus suddenly.

4875

*Resumption of that story about the prince who was smitten by a blow
from the king's mind and left this world before perfecting other virtues.*

Shorten this tale! The proud one's jealousy
In one year led the prince to die, you see.
And when the king came back to consciousness
He saw his eye's rage killed that man, no less.
On checking his own quiver he could tell
An arrow was now missing there as well:
'Where is that arrow?' he asked God in pain.
God said, 'In his throat. By it he was slain.'
That generous king had pardoned him, but now
He knew his arrow killed him anyhow.
The prince was slain; the king now wept in mourning.
He is both killer and bereaved, I'm warning.
If He weren't both, He wouldn't then be all,
Both killer and a mourner who will bawl.

4880

4885

The pale-cheeked martyr thanked God in his sorrow.
Only his body got struck by that arrow:
The body after all must leave one day;
The soul lives on with joy and won't decay.
The punishment fell on the man's skin only;
The lover went to the Beloved soundly.
Holding just the King's saddle-straps, he was
In the end taken to Perfection's Source.
And the third brother was the laziest,

4890

Winning in form and spirit in the test.*

*The bequest of that person who said, 'After I've gone the laziest of my
three children will inherit what I own.'*

A man once at the time of his own death

For his bequest said this with his last breath

(He had three sons like walking cypresses;

He'd given life and soul for them, no less):

'Whatever gold I own and property

Let it go to the laziest of the three!'

He told the judge this was his will before

Draining the cup of death. He lived no more.

The sons then told the judge, 'Please know, your honour,

4895

We orphans won't dispute what's from our father.

We listen and obey. He has the right.

We'll carry out what he decreed last night.

We are like Esmail—we won't try to stop

Though Abraham should give our necks the chop.

The judge said, 'Each of you, use your brain and

Tell me about your laziness first-hand,

So I can learn how lazy each one is

And without doubts know of your laziness!'

Mystics are the most lazy anyhow;

4900

They reap the harvest with no need to plough.

They have made laziness their prop—the Lord

Is doing their work; this they can afford.

Others do not see God now work away

And never rest from toil both night and day.

The judge said, 'Tell me clearly the degree

Of laziness you have, so I can see!'

The tongue's a curtain over hearts; it's known

For when the curtain moves the secret's shown.

A small one like one meat cube on a skewer

4905

Can't hide a hundred suns' forms from the viewer.

The spoken word may not in fact be true

And scent then tells if it's a lie to you.

The lovely meadow breeze is very different
From the Semum wind that is so malevolent.
The scents of truth and falsehood are as clear
As musk from garlic to our noses here.
If you can't tell your real friends from imposters
Complain about your sense of smell which falters.
The voices of the brave and the effete's
Are lions' feats next to a fox's feats.
The tongue is like a cooking pot's lid too—
Once it moves you can tell if it holds stew.
But, with sharp senses, from the steam alone
Whether it's sweetmeat or stew can be known.
When a young man taps a new pot he's trying
To tell if it is broken before buying.

4910

One brother said, 'If men talk, I have ways
Of knowing them at once; if not three days.'
The second said, 'If they speak, I can too;
And if they don't talk, I can get them to.'
The judge said, 'What if he's already heard
About this trick? He then won't say a word.'

4915

Parable

A mother told her child once similarly:
'If a ghost comes in your vicinity,
Or at a graveyard or a scary place
You see a hostile ghost with a black face,
Be brave and charge at that ghost straight away—
Immediately you'll see it run away
Because demonic ghosts will quickly flee
Anyone who approaches fearlessly.'
The child said, 'But its mother might have told
That ghost about it, making it more bold—
If I attack, it might jump as told to
By its own mother—what then can I do?
You're telling me to stand firm and not falter,
But that most ugly ghost, too, has a mother.'

4920

People and demons have one teacher—all.

Each side can win through Him though they be small.
Whichever side The Gentle One is on,
For God's sake, be on that side and you've won.

4925

The judge said, 'If that man won't say a word
Despite your trick, since he's already heard,
How will you learn his secret? Say what's true!'

That brother said, 'I'll sit there silent too,
And make a ladder out of patience thus,
For *patience is the key to happiness*.
If speech comes from my heart while I'm sat there
Beyond both joy and sadness, speech that rare,
I'll know he's sent it to me from his mind
Like Canopus in Yemen, that bright kind.
That speech comes from his heart's right-sided part.
There is a window linking heart to heart.'

4930